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ABSTRACT

This conference explored the relationship between the public library, community-based adult education, and lifelong learning. The eight commissioned papers presented include: "Community Based Adult Jewish Learning Program: Issues and Concerns" (Paul A. Flexner); "Rural and Small Libraries: Provisions for Lifelong Learning" (Bernard Vavrek); "Current Practice and Potential: Research and Adult Education in Museums" (Annie V.F. Storr); "Community Based Organizations and the Delivery of Lifelong Learning Opportunities" (Michael W. Galbraith); "On Learning to (Un)Learn for a Better Life" (Elio DeArrudah); "Adult Literacy and Life-Long Learning: Essential Issues" (Anita Ford Allen and Sylvia W. Keene); "Public Libraries, Lifelong Learning, and Older Adults: Background and Recommendations" (Connie Van Fleet); and "The Cooperative Extension System: A Facilitator for Access of Community-Based Education" (Barbara A. White and Byron Burnham). (MAS)

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Paper D

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND THE DELIVERY OF LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND THE DELIVERY OF LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

The future of our urban and rural communities will depend on an educated citizenry. Community-based organizations can provide a mechanism for opportunity to engage in lifelong learning, if properly cultivated. In this paper I examine and present a framework for conceptualizing community-based education and lifelong learning. The connection between community-based education and lifelong learning is made as well as recommendations for research that require attention if this connection is to become a reality. The role of the research agency is also described.

Conceptualizing Community and Community-Based Education

Every individual is a member of some kind of community and each, whether deliberately or unintentionally, participate in some aspect of learning provided within their social milieu. Communities are diverse entities. It is through this diversity that adult learners find educational opportunities to engage in purposeful learning. Community-based education providers are the mechanism for the engagement of such learning. However, to understand what is community and community-based education and their relationship, an examination of the concepts is warranted.

The Concept of Community

The word "community" comes from the Latin term, Communis,

meaning fellowship or common relations and feelings. Community is a value-laden term that evokes a variety of descriptions by a diverse range of individuals (Bellah, et al., 1985; Effrat, 1974, Galbraith, 1990a; 1992a, Luloff & Swanson, 1990; Moore & Feldt, 1993; Warren & Lyon, 1988). The concept of community is multidimensional in scope and perspective and generates a host of definitions, missions, aims, and images. Galbraith (1990a, p. 8) suggests that individuals in the United States live in a mega-community that is international, national, and local in scope and defines mega-community as a "large scale systematic community that is connected by cultural, social, psychological, economic, political, environmental, and technological elements."

Tonnies (1957) used the terms **gemeinschaft** and **gesellschaft** to describe two ways of how people relate to each other. A **gemeinschaft** community is characteristic of families, neighborhoods, and friendship groups that relate to each other in a sense of mutuality, stability, common identity and concerns, and a common subscription to social norms, bonds, and obligations. A **gesellschaft** community is one in which people relate to each other in a means-ends relationship. It is characterized by various forms of exchange with other people for the primary purpose of serving individual interests. There is little sentiment involved and the rationality within such a community is high in that shared identity, mutuality, and a common concern is absent. Between the two conceptual types of communities, it would suggest that a community that is

characterized by gemeinschaft seems most appropriate to bring about a democratic and harmonious process for engaging in lifelong learning opportunities.

Defining Community

Warren (1978, p. 1) suggests the idea of community is deceptively simple, "so long as one does not ask for a rigid definition." He found through a meta-analysis of some ninety-four definitions of community that sixty-nine such definitions included social interaction, common ties, and locational criteria as definitive of the concept. The emphasis on human interaction and relationships within places, commonalities in interests, values, and mores are frequently cited attributes of community. Warren ultimately defined community to be "that combination of social units and systems which perform the major social functions having locality relevance" (p. 9). In an earlier publication, Warren (1970) coined the phrase "the good community" in which a community is concerned with primary group relationships, autonomy, viability, power distribution, participation, commitment, heterogeneity, neighborhood control, and the extent of conflict exhibited. A good community is people-oriented, controlled, and democratic in nature. It is concerned with the capacity of local people to confront their problems through concerted actions, directing themselves to the distribution of power, arranging for participation and commitment in community affairs, understanding how differences among people can be tolerated, and debating the extent of neighborhood control and

conflict. Fellin (1987) echoes similar characteristics of a good community by describing a community as a group in which membership is valued as an end in its self. Kanter (1972) contends that the search for the good community is a quest for direction and purpose in the collective anchoring of the individual life.

The above definitional perspective is considered geographic and locational. However, others suggest that the emphasis should focus on the commonalities of interests, concerns, and functions of people (Bellah, et al., 1985; Brookfield, 1983; Galbraith, 1990b, 1992b; Hamilton & Cunningham, 1989; Hiemstra, 1993; Roberts, 1979). There are "communities of interest" and "communities of function" that may supersede the familiar locational expression of community. Communities of interest are those groups of individuals bound by some single common interest or set of common interests such as leisure interests, civic and special political interests, or spiritual and religious beliefs and affiliations. Being a "baseball or college basketball enthusiast" or perhaps an "opera lover" are examples of communities of interest. Groups identified by the function of major life roles such as professor, social worker, consultant, attorney, doctor, farmer, homemaker, parent, and so forth would be considered communities of function. Geographic communities, communities of interest, and communities of function intersect and overlap into the broad conceptualization of community.

Another way of defining community is derived from the field

of educational marketing in which demographic and psychographic communities exist. Demographic communities are those groups bound by common demographic characteristics such as race, gender, sex, and age. For example, to speak of the "African American community" or the "elderly community" is to address a demographic community. Psychographic communities are those formed by commonality of value systems, social class, and life style such as the "gay community" or the "rural middle class farm" community.

There are diverse ways of defining "community" as evidenced by the above. To define community strictly as geographical or locational would hamper the richness of its meaning and purpose. Accepting the diversity of such perspectives, Galbraith (1990a) suggested that community may be defined as "the combination and interrelationships of geographic, locational, and non-locational units, systems, and characteristics that provide relevance and growth to individuals, groups, and organizations (p. 5).

Defining Community-Based Education

Community-based education could be defined as an educational process by which individuals (in this case adults) become more competent in their skills, attitudes, and concepts in an effort to live in and gain more control over local aspects of their communities through democratic participation. Hamilton and Cunningham (1989, p. 439) suggest that "Community-based education operates on the assumption that a given community, whether urban or rural, has the potential to solve many of its own problems by

relying on its own resources and by mobilizing community action for problem resolution." They continue by indicating that the aims and purposes of community-based education usually are directly related to specific community issues such as career training, consumerism, environmental concerns, basic education, ethnic history and culture, governmental policies, and civic and political education. In addition, Kerensky (1981) emphasizes the necessity of learning new skills and knowledge about existing social problems. Learning is the dominant factor and as a result propels community-based education activities toward definite educational outcomes.

Compton and McClusky (1980) did not use the term "community-based education" but instead used the phrase "community education for development" and defined it as "a process whereby community members come to identify their problems and needs, seek solutions among themselves, mobilize the necessary resources, and execute a plan of action or learning or both. This educative approach is one in which community is seen as both agent and objective, education is the process, and leaders are the facilitators, in inducing change for the better" (p. 229). From this perspective it could be suggested that community-based education's primary purpose is to meet the unique needs of the community it serves, as a whole and individually. In addition, community-based education generates and utilizes available resources and skills, as well as those untapped skills and resources, to meet the varied needs of the community and

those of its residents.

Community-Based Education as Process and Program

Community-based education as a process would focus on the social relationships that develop as a result of interactions. It may be considered a "grounds-up" process since it begins with interactions with two or more community residents and then progressively expands to include many others within the community. Within this process, individuals come together become of common concerns, desires, and interests to participate in learning and decision-making. Hamilton and Cunningham (1989, p. 441) suggest that "In this process, residents learn more about the issues and make maximum use of local resources to solve problems, and they identify and control external sources of assistance." They continue by stating that "The primary emphasis .... is the psychosocial effect it has on the community residents as they expand social relationships for learning" (p. 441). The essence of community-based education as a process is the awareness of how social relationships assist in the development of interactions that spring forth common concerns related to learning, social, political, environmental, economic, and other factors.

Community-based education as a program is the organized activities that develop for the purpose of attaining a specific benefit. Objectives and procedures are recognized and the maintenance of the program follows some set of policies and procedures. If certain programs are highly specialized, subject-

matter professionals may be employed to assist in there development and operation. Hamilton and Cunningham (1989, p. 441) warns that "The emphasis on activities can sometimes overshadow participation of community residents in the decision-making process." Community-based education as a process or a program must retain its foundational belief that active participation of community citizens is paramount and that to accomplish this certain conditions of participation must be present: 1) freedom to participate; 2) ability to participate; and 3) willingness to participate (Cary, 1970).

Principles of Community-Based Education

Hiemstra (1993, p. 23) suggested that an educative community is "A community which is seen to be or is used as a learning laboratory in some manner. It is....associated with the notion of activation and facilitation of learning by an educational agent where some community resources, part, or agency is used to supplement the educational experience." He continues by stating that "A philosophy that accompanies the community education process is that learning is a continuous, lifelong experience and need" (p. 37). Several principles support this lifelong process as it relates to community-based education as putforth by various writers such as Anderson and Jeffrey (1992), Galbraith (1990b, 1992b), Hiemstra (1993), Kerensky (1989) and others:

Self-Determination. All community members have a right and responsibility to be involved in determining community needs and identifying community resources that can be

used to address those needs.

Self-Help. Community members are best served when their capacity to help themselves is encouraged and developed. They become part of solution and build independence rather dependence when they assume responsibility for their own well-being.

Leadership Development. Local leaders must be trained in such skills as problem-solving, decision-making, and group process as a means of sustaining ongoing self-help and community improvement efforts.

Localization. The greatest potential for high level public participation occurs when services, programs, and community involvement opportunities are close to where people live.

Integrated Delivery of Services. Interagency cooperation among organizations and agencies that operate for the public good can meet their own goals and better serve the public by collaborating with other organizations and agencies that are working toward common goals.

Reduce Duplication of Services. Communities should utilize to the fullest the physical, financial, and human resources within their locality and coordinate their efforts without duplication of services.

Accept Diversity. The segregation or isolation of people by age, income, social class, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, or handicapping condition inhibits the full

development of the community. Inclusion of the broadest possible cross section of community residents is warranted in the developmert, planning, and implementation of community programs, services, and activities.

Institutional Responsiveness. Serving the continuously changing needs of the public is an obligation of public institutions since they exist to serve the public.

Lifelong Learning. Formal and informal learning opportunities should be available to community members of all ages in a wide variety of community settings.

Principles associated with community-based education are grounded in the notion that each and every community member has a right to be involved in the identification and resolution of individual and community needs through a democratic participatory process. The total community, including all public organizations and agencies, is positioned to serve as the vehicle for bring about change and meeting identified needs.

Conceptualizing Lifelong Learning and Education

In this section the concept of lifelong learning and education will be examined as well as the various dimensions and psychosocial aspects of lifelong education.

Defining Lifelong Learning and Education

Lifelong learning and lifelong education have become popular slogans within the lexicon of American language. The two phrases have been used interchangeably within the literature as well as

synonymously to mean and promote adult, continuing, and community-based education. The very nature of the words suggests that lifelong learning and lifelong education do not take place only in adulthood but throughout life from birth to death. To conceptualize and understand lifelong learning and education, definitional distinctions must be made and in doing so an examination of words such as life, lifelong, learning, and education is warranted.

According to Galbraith (1992b, p. 3), "The word life conjures up definitions that range from political, religious, sociological, historical, anthropological, and psychological perspectives. Understanding life involves determining how society measures it and views it in relationship to these various perspectives. Life is composed of the growth and development of the human being that takes place from birth to death." Lifelong denotes this timespan.

Differentiating between learning and education also creates operational and definitional dilemmas as is evidenced by the frequency with which writers use the terms interchangeably. It is suggested by Apps (1985) that "Learning is defined as those internal changes that occur in our consciousness" (p. 4). When one accepts the tenets of lifelong, the definition of learning can be broadened to mean a process of transforming experience into knowledge, skills, and attitudes through a variety of processes. This definition recognizes the experiential nature of learning through different processes. Education therefore can be

defined as those processes, events, activities, and conditions that assist and encourage learning. Education from this perspective can be described as deliberate (planned) or unintentional (random).

Deliberate education is that which is provided by schools such as elementary and secondary, college and university, proprietary schools, university extension, and community education. It is also provided by nonschool organizations such as private industry, professional organizations, trade unions, military services, community organizations, churches, and other community-based educational agencies. A third source of deliberate education is by oneself through various forms of individual and self-directed study. Unintentional education is provided from everyday work experiences; from friends and contact with family and home experiences; from the mass media, such as television, movies, and radio; and from everyday contact with the environment through recreation and entertainment, travel, and community activities.

Lifelong learning means then those changes in consciousness that take place throughout the life span which result in an active and progressive process to comprehend the intellectual, societal, and personal changes that confront each individual human being. Lifelong learning suggests life span learning and the transformation process that takes place from birth to death. **Lifelong education** can be defined as a process of deliberate and unintentional opportunities that influence learning throughout

the life span. Dave (1976) states that lifelong education "seeks to view education in its totality. It covers formal, nonformal, and informal patterns of education, and attempts to integrate and articulate all structures and stages of education..."(p. 35..."it is a process of accomplishing personal, social, and professional development throughout the life span of individuals in order to enhance the quality of life of both individuals and their collectives" (p. 35). From this definition, lifelong education is incorporated into every aspect of society through the multitude of institutions and individuals within that society. It is deeply rooted in the social circumstances which determine the motives of human action (Wain, 1987).

Dimensions of Lifelong Education

Cropley and Dave (1978) suggest that lifelong education has two dimensions: vertical integration and horizontal integration. Galbraith (1992a) suggests a third category, learning to learn, as an important dimension of lifelong education as well.

Vertical integration stresses the notion that schooling and education are not synonymous processes and that learning itself is a continuous process throughout life (birth to death). This dimension does not reject the concept of formal schooling but it does affirm that most "rapidly and enduring changes during the process of personal development take place prior to the commencement of formal schooling [and that] the longest period of life by far is the one that commences after schooling end" (p. 34). Galbraith (1992a, p. 6) comments that "education is

[therefore] a major component of life and the strongest educational influences come from outside the formal school setting through the media, relationships with peers and family, the community, workplaces, and so on." Education is for all age levels and the ability to learn and grow is cumulative over a lifetime through the integration of various processes.

The horizontal dimension stresses the notion that education and life are linked. It views education as life-wide whereby school learning is coordinated with other components in the society in which learning occurs. The horizontal dimension suggests that a very wide range of the members in society should be involved in education and that knowledge itself should be seen as a broad integrated network. Education must be viewed as continuous throughout the life span and on a continuum that accepts the integration of school and life and the various educational components that influence life.

The third dimension of lifelong education is learning to learn. Galbraith (1992a, p. 6) states that "A prerequisite to any educated community or society is that its people acquire the skill to learn how to learn. This dimension suggests that the educated person learns how to adapt and change, either out of self-motivation to be more efficient or out of sheer necessity from societal and personal influences and changes." Smith (1982, p. 19) writes that learning how to learn "involves possessing, or acquiring, the knowledge and skill to learn effectively in whatever learning situation one encounters." This suggests that

learners acquire the ability to identify their own learning needs, formulate learning objectives, locate and identify appropriate resources and strategies to accomplish objectives, carry out the planned learning, and evaluate learning outcomes. These abilities are paramount for all learners and an essential component of lifelong education. The dimension of learning to learn suggests that all learners begin to question the habitual givens about their thoughts, values, attitudes, and knowledge and become critically reflective thinkers. Through this dimension lifelong education truly becomes vertically and horizontally integrated.

Psychosocial Aspects

Lifelong education does not take place in a vacuum but involves human beings and the society in which they live. It lifelong education is to be a reality, profound implications of a psychological as well as a social nature must be considered. Lifelong education is education for a changing world. Psychologically, individuals of all ages must extend their cognitive, affective, and motivation domains to cope with the changing intellectual demands of a society. The ability to understand the social and technological aspects of their culture as well as the ability to understand themselves is vital. Lifelong education should facilitate healthy personal and emotional growth as well as a sense of independence. Learning to learn relates to this psychological aspect in that it begins to equip learners with the ability and skill of how, what, why,

when, and where to learn. Galbraith (1992a, p. 7) suggests that "Lifelong education premises its process on the ability to understand and adapt to the psychological needs of individuals who are at different stages of their development."

Jarvis (1987) states that individuals grow and mature within the context of social living, thus becoming to some degree a reflection of the social situation. Within the social context, individuals endeavor to understand the personal, social, and intellectual aspects of their world. They begin to change as a result of their experiences. However, the social milieu is also continuously changing and this change is the norm rather than the exception. Consequently, educational structures are the recipients of the pressures for change as well as the initiators. Within this scheme, individuals also exert their will and become an agent for change. In doing this they become an active and progressive component in the learning process.

The psychosocial aspects mesh within the vertical and horizontal dimensions of lifelong education. It is recognized that lifelong education must be flexible enough to accommodate individual options and social differences. By incorporating all the dimensions and aspects of lifelong education into a conceptual framework, education and learning can begin to be viewed in its totality and take its place within the community of formal processes (education within any formal bureaucratic organization such as the school or university); within nonformal processes (education outside the framework of the formal system

that provides selected types of learning through YMCAs, libraries, museums, and so forth); and within informal processes (education obtained through the interaction of people by means of the workplace, friends, family, and so on).

Community-Based Education and Lifelong Learning

The concepts of community-based education and lifelong learning, when merged, utilizes formal, nonformal, and informal educational processes. Through this merger, it has the potential to impact individuals, groups, and communities in the way they live, inform, and educate themselves. It can serve as a mechanism for self-fulfillment as well as for social, political, and psychological empowerment. When community-based education and lifelong learning is connected both conceptually and in practice, a unique relationship is developed that gives individuals and communities a sense of hope and dignity, a sense of responsibility for their own communities and lives, and a sense of voice within the social and political arenas. The connection suggests an inclusionary and liberating significance for individuals, groups, and communities.

Figure 1 depicts a framework for connecting lifelong education and community. It begins with the assumption that lifelong education exists and that it is available across the life span, from birth to death. Lifelong educational opportunities exist in each community in three distinct educational forms: formal, nonformal, and informal. Each process is a valid means of assisting lifelong learners in acquiring and

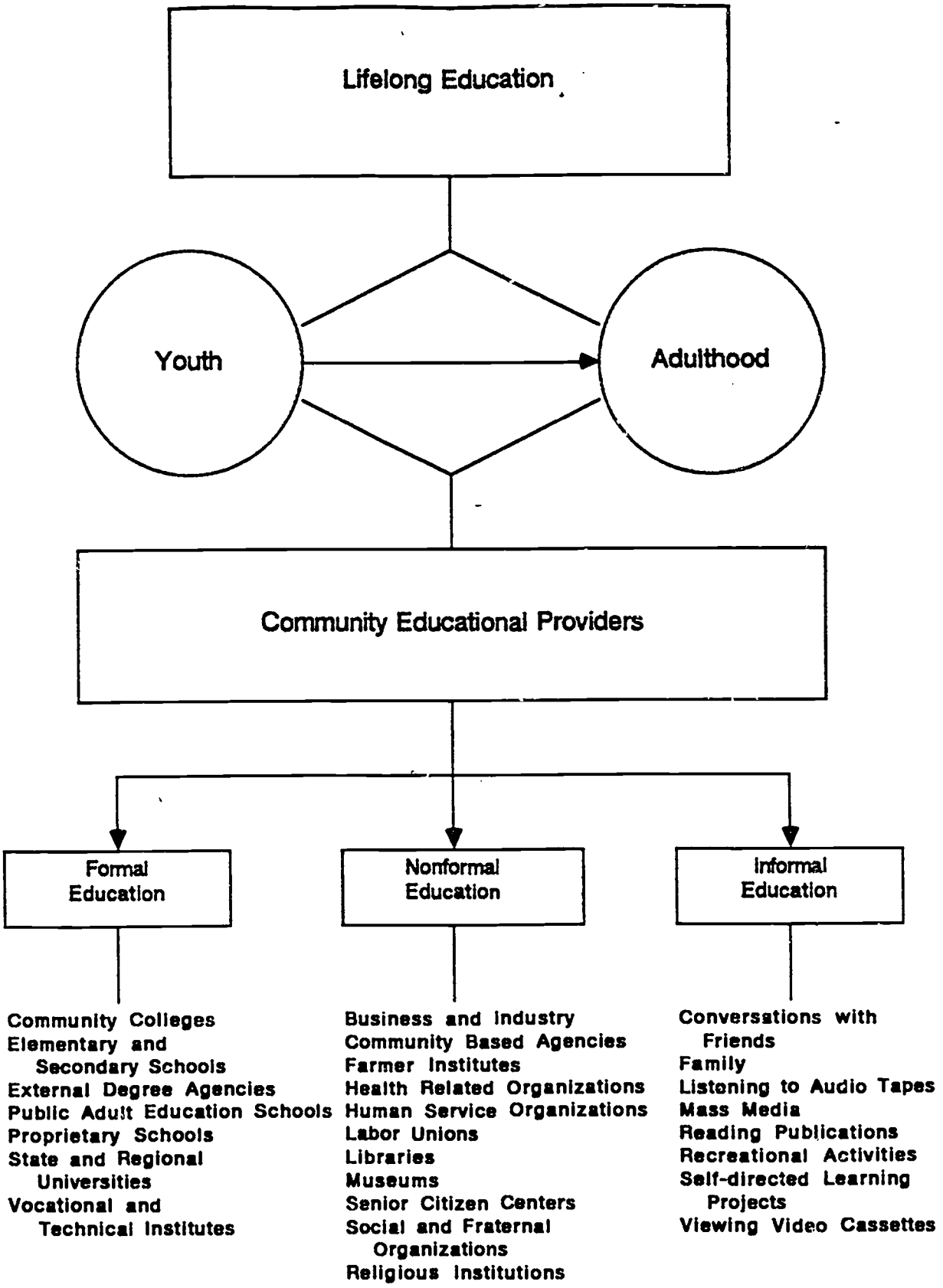

Figure 1. -- Framework for connecting lifelong education and community

meeting their educational needs. It suggests that lifelong learners can make choices in fulfilling their educational concerns and desires in a multitude of ways.

Formal Community-Based Education

This category consists of for-profit and nonprofit bureaucratic organizations within the community who have as their primary function the delivery of formal education in which youth and adult learners may participate. The goal of the organization is to provide some type of credential such as a diploma, certificate or degree. Because of the nature of the settings, instructors or teachers are professional educators who hold expertise in the area of specialization. Learners in formal community-based education settings have little control over what is taught and how it is taught. Educators make value and prescriptive judgments of what is appropriate for learners to acquire within their educational pursuits.

Nonformal Community-Based Education

A number of organizations and agencies can be viewed as nonformal community-based education providers, although education is a secondary or allied function to their primary mission or purpose. The YMCA or YWCA, cooperative extension, religious institutions, health institutions, service clubs, voluntary organizations, business and industry human resource development programs, correctional institutions, libraries, museums, senior citizen organizations, and a plethora of other community-based agencies are examples of such nonformal community-based

educational providers. In these settings learners are more likely to participate voluntarily and are not seeking any type of credential or degrees but may receive in some cases a certificate of completion. Learners retain some control over what they want to learn as well as when, how, and where the learning takes place. The nonformal settings range from nonstructured to structured. The instructors may or may not be professionally trained but overall seem to be quite successful in helping learners reach their educational goals.

Informal Community-Based Education

This category encompasses the vast majority of education that takes place for adult learners within community structures. Informal community-based education is independent of institutional and organizational providership. The community itself is the instrument of education and learners are guided by their own desires and learning processes. Learning within this context may be deliberate or fortuitous, but is always personally meaningful to the learner. Informal community-based education is characterized by interaction between human and material resources. The learner is in complete control over how, what, and where the learning will occur. Although the learner may consult with others concerning a their inquiry, in most cases a professionally trained educator is absent. The community serves as the educator as well as the learning resource and laboratory.

Research Recommendations

Community-based educational providers such as libraries,

religious institutions, senior citizen centers, museums, social and fraternal organizations, business and industry, farmer institutes, community colleges, state and regional universities, vocational and technical institutions, health related organizations, the mass media, to name a few, are positioned to assist in the design and development of community-based lifelong learning communities and the provision of continuous learning opportunities. The unanswered question is whether or not such opportunity is recognized by community-based providers and the community residents themselves? It seems essential to investigate the "realities" of communities; that is what is actually going on or not going on to enhance lifelong learning.

Community-Based Education and Lifelong Learning Questions

Several research agendas may be grounded in quantitative and qualitative studies and address such questions as:

1. How do communities view their learning opportunities beyond the notion of school?
2. What does a lifelong learning community-based education community look like?
3. What is it that community residents desire if given options and selections?
4. What are the enhancers and barriers to the development of lifelong learning communities? The enhancers and barriers to participation of community residents?
5. Are community members getting their learning needs met through nontraditional means? If so, what means are they using?
6. What community coordination and cooperation is needed to enhance lifelong learning?
7. What training and education is needed for community leaders to understand the economic, social, political, and personal benefits of investing in lifelong learning opportunities?
8. What do communities need to do to revitalize the "community spirit" and believe in the concept and practice of lifelong learning and education?
9. What training is needed for future educators (professional or life) to promote and work with lifelong learning programs

and agendas?
10. What will it mean for the community to increase the number of adults engaging in lifelong learning?
11. What role should each individual community-based provider play in the development of a lifelong learning community?
12. What should the role of policy-makers and funding sources be in the development and maintenance of a lifelong learning agenda?
13. How could technology enhance the development and delivery of lifelong learning opportunities?
14. What role should mentoring have in the development and growth of lifelong learners?

An extensive plan for action is required to address these research questions. It will mean the development of new perspectives concerning community and its connection to lifelong learning. While each of the above questions are essential in bring about a better understanding of community-based lifelong learning, an understanding of the last two questions (#13 & #14) I believe have great potential in advancing the endless reality of lifelong learning opportunities that could be afforded in each community.

A major focus, I believe connected to the development of community-based education and lifelong learning, will be the use of technology. The uses and applications of new technologies to improve program effectiveness and learning is imperative for a futuristic perspective to emerge in the advancement and enhancement of lifelong learning opportunities. However, it does raise many questions such as: How will program delivery be different? How will learning be facilitated more effectively through diverse technologies? What do we know about how adults learn through technology? How can we reduce the "phobias" attached to the use of technology? What will technology-user

communities look like? What are the social, financial, political, economic, psychological, culturally and so forth realities of engaging in technology to bring about lifelong learning communities?

To provide urban and rural communities with endless learning opportunities, technology will be a major component within each and every community. The provision of technological providership requires change and new perspectives about where, how, when, and why we engage in learning. Communities will realize the potential and power for learning that is not just localized but world-wide.

A second major component that I believe holds great potential in bringing about effective community-based lifelong learning is associated with mentoring. Mentoring is a powerful emotional and passionate interaction whereby the mentor and protege experience personal, professional, and intellectual growth and development. It is a unique one-to-one relationship that encourages learning. As long as one has some expertise in something (ie. gardening, sports, politics, specific culture, literature, and so forth) and someone else wishes to learn about it, the potential for a mentoring relationship exists. This is irrespective of the socio-economic, political, cultural, physical, age, race, gender factors associated with the individuals engaged in the mentoring relationship. The primary factor is learning and having someone help assist and guide in the journey.

Mentoring is not just giving advise to someone, but

involves relationship building, information giving, assisting in providing alternative views and options, challenging unproductive strategies, information, and behaviors, role modeling, and perhaps most importantly providing a vision about what can be (Galbraith & Cohen, in press). Every community has individuals with expertise in a multitude of things who, if connected to the right desired learner, would provide learning opportunities for those seeking such knowledge. In essence, the mentoring process allows everyone in the community to be a teacher and everyone to be a learner. While most mentoring is done face-to-face, the investigation of mentoring through technology holds a new potential for all learners who have access to a computer. It hold the possibility of serving as a mentor to potential mentees on a national and international basis or being mentored by someone far distanced from the local community in which the individual lives.

Role of the Research Agency

The federal research agency is in a position to address the above questions and fund independent researchers to conduct lifelong learning research. It would be advantageous to do so in a "community of researchers" in which the team would consist of diverse individuals from many disciplines. Since lifelong learning is not discipline specific it seems only reasonable to conduct such research from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The community of researchers may be housed out of grant-supported regional centers, under the direction of a national center, for the study of community-based education and lifelong learning. To

enhance the amount of information collected about community-based education and lifelong learning, each center would focus on specific areas of understanding. The important question is not just "what is" but "what could and should" be done to create community-based lifelong learning communities? An essential element of this research is to make it useful and practical--how do we incorporate such findings and practices into each urban and rural community.

A second major role of a research agency is to investigate the potential for the establishment of a national mentoring institute. The institute would provide training to those interested in designing, developing, and operating community-based mentoring programs. In addition, mentoring institutes could include mentoring through technological training as well. Considering the focus and purpose of lifelong learning, mentoring seems to provide perhaps the greatest opportunity to extend lifelong learning across the life span for every community member, considering the wealth of knowledge and information that each community possesses.

Conclusion

Galbraith (1990c) states that:

> Social, demographic, technological, and economic forces contribute to the changing nature of community as well as the inherent need for its members to maintain the skill and motivation to pursue a variety of learning interests throughout their lives. This requires communities of

learners who are thoughtful and autonomous and know how to use multiple resources in the community. A learning community calls for discriminating consumers of educational services and learning opportunities. (p. 89)

Building a community of lifelong learners requires choices that are made by adult learners, community organizations, and educators of adults. An informed citizenry can assist in the development of lifelong learning communities through community-based educational providers.

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"Rural and Small Libraries: Providers for Lifelong Learning"

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to consider the nature of rural and small public libraries in the United States in the light of present and existing opportunities that they provide for adult lifelong learning, and to ponder the future of collaborative services. Until recently, small libraries have been ignored as models of service. Probably because rural communities, in general, have been neglected units of study (Fitchen, 1991; Cigler, 1994). This minimization of nonmetropolitan (a term synonymous with rural) libraries is surprising when one understands that the vast majority of these public institutions are located in the countryside. As America has attempted to adjust from an agricultural to industrial infrastructure, it is now confronted with a new sociological challenge--dealing with a society predicated on information access and use. The singularly important question, which cannot be begged, is how does the public library fit in, if at all? And what is its role in the future of rural America, where daily information needs exist and must be met?

Limitations

The limitations of this paper should be noted as well. While the role of the public library is explored in relation to adult lifelong learning, it does not consider the manner in which adults learn, which is a complex field of investigation in itself. "Adult education is a field of study and educational practice whose scope and significance are poorly understood" (Alkin, 1992, p. 30). Allen Tough's (1979)

review of research on adult education reveals, for example, a study of rural adult learners whose main interest is job related, but who needed help in setting goals and finding information and materials. In another investigation, public library respondents were asked where they preferred to learn. Most chose the home--the public library was ranked sixth out of seven (Tough, 1979, p. 174-175).

So in evaluating the present and future role of lifelong learning in the public library, reviewers must be aware of the dynamics of adult learning that take place in a society of an increasing number of alternatives. Because of the lack of research on this topic, it would be very important to understand the perceptions that adults have about the public library in relation to it as a resource for lifelong continuing education.

Defining Rural

While statistically describing rural America as a place comprising 2,288 counties, containing 83% of the nation's land, and home to 21% of the population (51 million) is not a problem (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], p. 2, 1995), defining a "rural model" is more of a challenge. The United States Bureau of the Census does it by indicating that a place of at least 2,500 people denotes an urban area, and, therefore, really doesn't define a rural space. Other sources contend, for example, that only the people who have lived in a rural area for some time talk about "rural." Another group that is fond of "rural" is the academic researcher. Increasingly, one will encounter the term "country" used in place of "rural," as, "One lives in the country." This approach also helps to dispel the possibility of "rural"

being interpreted as a pejorative term.

In 1978, the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship [CSRL], at Clarion University of Pennsylvania, added to the dimensions of the rural metaphor by including populations up to 25,000 in its studies--in addition to the nondefinition provided by the Census folks. This action was taken because of feeling that <2500 was too restrictive and would have excluded places such as Clarion, a population of about 6000 individuals, that while defined by the federal government as urban, easily fits into a rural model.

In the late 1980's, the CSRL started to use the concepts of "small" and "rural" synonymously for a variety of reasons. First, as rural communities continue to change and are encroached upon by urbanizing influences, it is increasingly difficult to discern differences between models. Parenthetically, it should be noted that for research purposes as well as for the discussion of this paper, the libraries (rural or small) being discussed are independent community libraries as opposed to, for example, the branches of a larger library system. Second, the federal government is increasingly using "rural" and "nonmetro" to be the same thing, further enlarging the model (USDA, 1995, p. 25) The third reason for using the terms "rural" and "small" to mean the same thing developed out a conference engagement for this author in New Jersey. It was the author's impression that one was to talk about rural library services until the conference coordinator indicated that those in attendance really represented "small" libraries and not rural ones. The implication was, of course, that in the nation's most urbanized state the chance of seeing a cow out of the library

window was remote. Incidentally, the possibility of getting a glimpse of farm animals from any window of a small or rural library is also slim in that the United States has long since passed from being an agricultural economy. "Today, only about 5 million people, less than 10 percent of the rural population, live on farms" (USDA, 1995, p.4). Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that 53% of employed farm residents work in nonagricultural industries, and 73% of employed women who live on farms do not work in farming (Dortch, 1994). But back at the conference, this author hastily corrected notes and simply excluded references to "rural" and substituted "small." It reinforced the fact that some individuals, and not only in Jersey, viewed rural as a negative term. It further solidified the notion that issues and services pertaining to rural libraries were the same as those confronting librarians in small libraries. For students of rural America, communities may be usefully divided into the following types: industrial, ranch, resort, retirement (Glasgow, 1991), manufacturing, agricultural, college/university, mining, and the seat of government (Raftery, 1986). But categories disintegrate into complex socioeconomic issues that sometime hide the realities of life on the farm, poverty, abuse, low educational attainment, malnourishment, and the absence of medical practitioners (Horwitz, 1993; Weinstein, 1994), etc. Unfortunately, an idyllic, romantic view of "life in the country" has sometimes been both an hindrance and counterproductive to finding practical solutions for problems. While an increasing number of Americans perceive rural as encompassing the good life, and in many places it does, at the same time it also obscures the conflicts between established rural types who see no need for new

roads and schools in the face of population growth, and the "come-heres" (as the new rural folks in Virginia are affectionately known) who look in vain for the local deli (which rather may have a name such as Lander's Big Store) and wonder why the public library has neither a computer nor online database searching available (Rimer, 1993). It also frequently raises conflicts between the new rural people (transplanted urbanites) who like the overall sense of bucolic America just as it is, thank you--it is afterall what they have sought, and the established population who sees needful jobs being created by building prisons, incinerators/land fills, and casinos (Fitchen, 1991; Clines, 1993; Hinds, 1993; Terry, 1993). There are any number of anecdotal illusions that one may use to characterize the country. A colleague recently told this author of visiting a small community where it seemed that drivers never used their turn signals. When he/she inquired why this was the case, the response was that "everyone knows where everyone else is going." Those who live in rural America or are students of this environment would like it to be the one nostalgically viewed by the humorist Garrison Keillor at his fictional Lake Wobegon Minnesota, "Where all the women are strong, the men are good looking, and the children are above average" (Karlen, 1994, p. 39). Sadly, rural America is also a place where people live in discarded cars and buses, where women and children are abused, and an increasing number also live below the poverty line.

> As local residents of almost all communities have become increasingly dependent on the larger society for meeting many daily needs, and as the ability of local institutions and

> groups in rural areas to hold the commitments of residents has declined, physical isolation has become more closely associated with social isolation than with social cohesion (Wilkinson, 1992, p. 11).

It is also a place where recently a 2 year old child was allegedly beaten by his/her father into a comatose state and a member of the local church committed suicide because of being distraught over his/her job. Life in the country has become less tranquil.

Rural Libraries

To discuss public librarianship in the United States is to realize the fact that 80% (7,118) of these institutions are located in population centers serving up to 25,000 people. Of this 80%, three out of ten libraries (2,656) may be found providing services in places up to 2,500 individuals (Chute, 1994, p. 25). The majority of rural libraries (<2500 people) are staffed by one full-time person, have a collection of fewer than 10,000 books and serial volumes, and operate within a total budget of $21,000 (Chute, 1994, pp. 33, 61, 37). This situation prompted at least one author to write about the "genteel poverty" of the library (Baldwin, 1993). For emphasis, this author would like to point out "total budget" referred to previously, means exactly that. It represents funds available for everything from paying the utilities to staff salaries. This is unlike a situation in a school library, for example, where salary costs come from a line item in the school's budget for personnel, and the librarian's allocation is primarily for materials. Parenthetically, some rural libraries in the United States have no line item in their budgets for book purchases.

In these instances, a variety of different means are used to raise funds, including donations for memorials--for those who are deceased, or living memorials in recognition of someone in the town. Rural libraries have been using the latter approach also as a means of obtaining children's books donated by the kids themselves. In comparison to the basic model of rural (<2,500), in service populations up to 25,000, the typical public library has from two to four full-time staff persons available, the book and serial volume collection numbers 24,000, and the total operating budget is $117,000. While an improvement over the conditions facing smaller libraries, one will recognize that these are not luxurious factors of support (Chute, 1994, pp. 33, 61, 37).

Planning Considerations

As decision makers contemplate avenues for lifelong learning at the community level, the following selected comments about rural library services, in general, may be of some value:

First, if one were to conduct a survey among those responsible for the management of the community library and to inquire about the most pressing issues facing those individuals, there is little doubt that library financing would lead the list. Overall, throughout the country, financial support for public libraries is a relative matter, with some communities being able to provide a decent working budget for services and activities, while others are struggling. Per capita expenditures (determined on a state basis) range, for example, from a high of over $30 to a low of seven dollars (Chute, 1994, pp. 70-71). There is sharp concern about the future,

however. Accelerating the always poignant issue of library financing is not only the continuing costs of doing business on an everyday business (along with acquiring new technology), but wondering what imminent cuts in the federal budget--particularly in relation to the Library Services and Construction Act [LSCA], will bring. While 80% of the community's library budget comes from local sources (with property taxes in the lead), cuts in LSCA funding will effect future library programming, cooperative efforts, and a diminution of services provided through state library agencies--among other things. It should not be a surprise to any reader that taxpayers--at all levels--are against raising assessment to pay for services. And perhaps not so ironically, these same individuals want institutional activities to remain at present levels. Community leader have had to be very flexible in attempting to raise sufficient funds to support the local library. Previously, for example, what may have been viewed as fund raisers (as phonothons) to enhance endowments or provide for special programming is now a built in factor for raising working capital to enable the library to function on a day-to-day basis. As a consequence of need, one may witness a wide-range of fund raising activities employed at the local level--everything from selling stationery to used books, wine and cheese parties, dances, and direct solicitations to local community groups such as the Rotary, Women's Club, etc. While these events may be productive, there must be people of good will motivated to assist the library in its "hour of need." Small and rural libraries may be in trouble in the future as there are fewer and fewer young adults available to act as volunteers and commit the enormous time that is required for the support of local institutions,

particularly the public library. Where there are no jobs, there will be no community.

At present, it is relatively easy to forecast future funding trends of rural and small public libraries. Those than can--will. Those that can't-- won't. The public library has always been a locally administered institution. This fact of life has been magnified as the federal government configures itself to assume less and less a role in traditional library services. At issue in this matter of financial support is an extremely important question. Who is responsible for the inadequate funding base for America's rural and small libraries? The answer has many parts. One facet that the library community does not like to address, however, is its general failure to articulate the public library's significance to an extent that opinion leaders are convinced of the public library's contribution to the community's well being. In addition to other services, for example, the public library is one of the best economic values around. In most places, this has not been emphasized. Because of a collective sense of historical inaction, rural and small public libraries now fight for the continuation of their institutional lives.

Second, rural and small towns are traditionally conservative institutions. They can be both unfriendly to outsiders and new ideas. From practical experience, for example, it appears to take about 15 years to become accepted as a "local." When the author first moved to Clarion, Pennsylvania, and a long time after that, the only way one could explain to boro officials that the alley (next to the author's house) had not been plowed of the snow

was to indicate that one was talking about the "Miller House" (the previous and long-time owner of the residence). As another example of this, amusing jokes are told about rural people giving directions by using landmarks that ceased to exist decades ago. Such as, "turn left where Dave Fowler's barn used to be." The refrain that "we never did it that way before" is not meant to be used as a global slur on community leaders in rural and small towns, but it is an attitude that is important to recognize. Its corollary is "show me," and one does not have to be in the great state of Missouri for this to be relevant. Unfortunately, the conservative approach to things may also be shared by library personnel and trustees/board members who see no reason to change the routines of life in their favorite place. Parenthetically, it may be of interest to note that the typical librarian has lived in his or her community for an average of 17 years and has been the librarian for ten years (Vavrek, 1989, p. 93). Sometimes this inflexibility exists because of individuals' lack of experience and education, which will be discussed shortly. Among other things, planning for the future will continue to be a challenge in places where people have really not thought much about the present library and its community role.

Third, in the view of this author, the most important factor limiting the present and future development of rural and small town information services is the lack of academically trained staff in America's libraries. Although this might appear to be a self-serving comment coming from someone who has spent many years as an educator, it is better understood in the context of the fact that only about 34% (3,452) of the full-time librarians in rural libraries (<25,000) have an American Library

Association's [ALA] master's degree, and in communities of (<2500) people the incidence is five percent (86) (Chute, 1994, p. 29). If one were to diagram the reasons for the educational situation cited above, they would include expressed attitudes such as: "we have never had a librarian with a 'university' degree before; why do we need one now?," and, "what's the matter with a salary of $13,000?" Additional reasons include: the relatively few schools of library and information science serving a geographically dispersed population; the inability of individuals to leave their positions to participate in classroom coursework; and the attitude of some staff persons who don't recognize that they have a need to pursue formalized education. Some of these problems are being assuaged by enterprising institutions that are aggressively offering long-distance educational opportunities to students either in person or via satellite/cable. Another resource to help the situation is LISDEC, the Library and Information Science Distance Education Consortium, which is in its developmental stages. This latter idea will enable students, who would matriculate into one school, become global consumers in that they would be able to enroll in any other library and information science program around the country through the Mind Extension University or some similar carrier. One would be able to stay at home and have library and information science courses delivered by cable television (Barron, 1991). The problems of providing avenues of education are, of course, not only limited to the formal, credit generating, degree awarding types. A crucial analog to this is continuing education. Presently, in addition to the schools of library and inf. mation science, library cooperatives, systems, and regional libraries, along with

state library agencies have been attempting to provide consumers with what they want and need. Unfortunately, there are too many library staff and trustees in need of CE, particularly pertaining to technology, than providers. And frequently there is little that is systematic about what is offered. Teleconferencing, for example, is an important and cost-effective way of providing new information, however, when the program fades the question is, "now where does that printer driver get installed?" And there may not be anyone available to provide the "hand holding" support that is needed. The issue of education is immensely significant as rural and small towns become virtual communities in the dimensions of cyberspace (Rheingold, 1993). In addition to providing educational opportunities for library staff, in relation to technological expertise, it may be required for each community or combination of communities to provide their own administrator/technical person. This is the approach that the enterprising town of Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, has taken (Depo, 1991).

Fourth, in the view of this author, not only is trustee development key to future planning of any type, it is a topic waiting for action. State library agencies, for example, deserve considerable credit for their efforts in attempting to provide workshops and other educational modules for trustees. States such as Nebraska have gone further than most in establishing certification requirements for trustees to remain active (Nebraska Library Commission, 1992). At the same time, anecdotal information from trustees and librarians around the country suggest that quite often the "me vs them" mentality prevails. If libraries in rural communities are to prosper,

it can not be at the expense of attempting to roll-over trustees, who after all not only hire and fire the librarian but are responsible for the overall financial solvency of the library. It should not be the reverse, either. While it is a simple matter, clearly, the form of development needed to insure that the library plans for the future, uses its resources wisely in consort with other agencies, and becomes a true community information center, begins with a mutual working trust between library staff and trustees/directors. The author has been made more sensitive to these issues over the last ten years, since one's wife has been president of the board of the local public library.

Fifth, while one would like to believe that the situation is changing, planners must be aware of the fact that the typical rural public library has probably not conducted any form of community or user survey. Vavrek (1989) reported that only 22% (81) of the libraries investigated had conducted a community analysis over the last five years, and 23% (86) of the libraries had multi-year plans available. In the absence of statistical data describing the library's use and the attitude of clients toward available services, planning is done in an ad hoc manner, at best. Substituted for survey data, library personnel will use interpersonal methods of information gathering, following the impression that one is familiar with everyone in the community who uses the library. This approach obscures situations involving new people who have moved into the service area and certainly does not provide an opportunity to include those individuals who presently are not card carrying members of the library. While more comments on this matter will follow, present research

suggests that about half of the population of a typical rural community, utilizes the public library in some fashion. Clearly, those responsible for the development of rural and small libraries, must work to expand the overall number of people who are library "regulars." This is a key element in insuring that the local library provides a critical role. Presently, it is not perceived as accomplishing that.

Sixth, notwithstanding the age of electronic access to information through a variety of networks (Inter, Free, Use, LANs, WANs, RANs etc.), the typical rural library is perceived by its public as primarily a place of books. Despite the wide variety of resources available in the smallest library, user studies suggest that requests for bestsellers and leisure reading materials outstrip the demand for informational needs such as answering reference questions (Vavrek 1990; Estabrook 1991; Wittig 1991; Vavrek 1993). Historically, public library studies have typically exhibited these characteristics. The public library's symbolic connectivity with books is not difficult to discern. Books are linked directly to reading and literacy efforts (and those things aren't bad). Further, small libraries do not have the funds to support individualized public relations efforts. As a consequence, ALA generated "propaganda" abound, emphasizing the singularity of books. One will find an array of posters adorning the walls of the typical rural library, depicting personae from Sting to Oprah Winfrey, pitching reading through the ever popular medium of books. This author once asked an American Library Association [ALA] colleague that wasn't he/she aware of the fact that all of these visual presentations reinforced only one thing. The response was that how were individuals supposed to be depicted showing

information? This was about ten years ago and things haven't changed. The seminal role played by books in small and rural libraries is not difficult to grasp. In addition to those things mentioned above, one must consider the tradition of libraries as repositories of books. Librarians have been brought up in this cultural environment. As suggested earlier, while things are changing, the typical rural library has not much money to invest in alternative technological resources to offset its historical image. Additionally, not much time is spent marketing or advertising the diverse services available. As a result, while about 70% of the library users (Vavrek, 1990) heard or saw advertisements about the library over the last year, over 40% of the general public had not (Vavrek, 1993). In context, though, it must be understood that it is difficult to provide much in the way of advertisement if the community has no channels of mass communications, such as, local newspapers, radio stations, etc. This, of course, does not preclude producing the usual brochures and mailers that could be distributed widely in grocery stores, through churches, etc.

As a corollary to the above concern about the lack of advertising, it is of some significance to know that half of the nonusers studied by Vavrek (1993) indicated that they were not familiar with any of the library's services with the exception of books, magazines, and newspapers. Perhaps it is not surprising that half of the American public does not use the public library because of a perceived lack of time and that there is no need (Estabrook, 1991; Vavrek, 1993).

Seventh, the next item that this author would like to offer for consideration is particularly significant. Seventy percent of the users of nonmetropolitan public

libraries are women. Further, while the percentage has not been as dramatic, user studies of public libraries, in general, have always shown that females outnumber male users (Knight & Nourse, 1969; Doremus Porter Novelli, 1987). The interesting thing, however, is that in most instances analysts have spent little time considering why the tendency of use has been this way and what it means. The prevailing attitude has appeared to include a type of casualness, and then moving on to something else. While this author certainly does not have a total explanation for this phenomenon of use, perhaps from the mouths of babes we have some interpretation. A few years ago the young daughter of one of our research associates suggested that it was easy to understand why the local public library appears to be a place for women. "Usually, the librarian is a woman; there are only restrooms for women; the story hour is directed by a woman; there are mostly romance books in the library; and when the library has a fund-raiser, the prize is usually a quilt or something else that women like, instead of a fishing rod." Although this previous interpretation may not stand the rigors of a research investigation, at the emotional level it reveals at least one perception of life in the country. It is also the author's impression, and not necessarily substantiated by the research literature, that women read more than men (at least the "stuff" currently in the typical library), and that despite an increasing number of women working outside of the household and a growing number of men staying at home, the female member has the continuing responsibility of "educating" children. This includes what are important trips to the library with the kids--for storyhours and beyond. One was secretly amused by listening to the short

conversation between mother and child at the local K-Mart. While the mother was scolding the child, it was with the admonition: "If you don't behave, we won't go the library." Now, that is something to consider.

When the CSRL began reporting that 70% to 80% (Vavrek , 1990, Pennsylvania) of rural library users were women, some colleagues politely suggested that this was attributable to the fact that women were in the library "fetching" things for members of the household. This possibility was considered further and it was determined that only in 28% of the cases were women in the library for reasons other than their own (Vavrek, 1990). It is likely to assume that women will want to support their local public libraries. Whether this situation will continue in the future, should be a matter of great concern to library planners. With more and more women working outside of the home, their level of library use may diminish linearly because of a lack of time. But beyond the role of women as library supporters and users, it is crucial that services be targeted to men. Serious efforts should be made to achieve some parity between men and women. Overall, those responsible for the management of the community's library must strive to consistently broaden the base of supporters for the immediate future. This is the only way to insure both a replacement factor for library users who leave the community (or join it) and the survival of the institution.

Eighth, the implications of technology for those responsible for future planning is inescapably important. Initially, describing technology, of course, involves a continuum of different things--to some it may mean for the first time that the library has a phone or conventional typewriter. One state library colleague, for example,

indicated that librarians were interested in obtaining LSCA funds in his or her state to install a bathroom for the first time in the library. While impoverished libraries continue to be a concern, as noted earlier in a review of financial support, their needs are also changing. Every librarian would love to be a player in the game of technology. Providing sufficient funds to accomplish this is another concern. The situation is definitely improving. Because of the influence of cooperative library ventures, the smallest library is now being included in online catalog access, statewide data bases, Internet connections etc. Inhibiting this growth of the newest technology is a matter that was discussed earlier--educational needs. Typically, the infrastructure to support the daily use of all of the newly applied technology in the library does not exist. Obviously, the situation varies throughout the country, but this author believes that the following example is symptomatic of the situation. In a state that shall remain nameless, library personnel were gathered at various places around the state to receive a program that was being broadcast by satellite. Unfortunately, few of the sites were actually able to receive the program because the satellite coordinates had been altered and individuals simply were unaware of how to go about changing things at the local level. Unless there is a major change of both attitude and implementation, small and rural libraries will not be able to cope with the daily application of technology that is being initiated at warp speed.

To illustrate what is happening on an overall basis with the implementation of technology, the results of a recent preliminary investigation conducted by the CSRL of (n=317) libraries, in populations <25,000, may be of some interest. Preliminary

data suggest that each library responding had at least one personal computer, fax machine, and CD-ROM workstation. While the reported personal computer is used for a variety of tasks, word processing is the most popular. Most libraries report, however, that they spend less than $500 annually for purchase of things pertaining to technology, as, for example, software, CD-ROM applications, and hardware. And not surprisingly, the most limiting factor in acquiring more technology is the lack of funds (Moberly, 1994).

Finally, on the matter of technology, the following may be of some interest. Current national studies indicate that only about a third of the public is interested in accessing databases, making bank transactions, etc., and about 25% are enamored of the idea of using electronic bulletin boards, online shopping, etc. (Personal Computers, 1993). While these views and circumstances may change, it is important to recognize the fact that not everyone may be as supportive of the new technology as we would like to assume or feels that it is needed. Librarians referring to themselves as "cybrarians" may not really bring the information society and cyberspace any closer to the local community.

The ninth, and last topic that this author would like to offer for planning considerations relates to providing library and information services to Native Americans. Among institutions serving rural populations, those on Indian Reservations merit particular attention.

> The Strategic Plan for the Development of Library and Information Services to Native Americans...indicates that the

> lack of coordination among diverse Federal agencies and the lack of overall coordinating leadership has impeded development of Native American library programs. Most States do not include tribal libraries in their statewide library network plans (United States National Commission on Libraries and Information Science [USNCLIS], 1992, p. 12).

The above situation is unfortunate in many ways, particularly in the light of the fact that reservation libraries may be one of the best examples of multi-function facilities. For example, the community college libraries at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and the Devil's Lake Sioux Reservation, in North Dakota, function also as public and tribal library libraries. This pattern may be seen in South Dakota, Montana, etc. The USNCLIS has recommended the following challenges for change: 1. Develop consistent funding sources required to support improved Native American library and information services; 2. Strengthen library and information services training and technical assistance to Native American communities; 3. Develop programs to increase tribal library material holdings and to develop relevant collections in all formats; 4. Improve access and strengthen cooperative activities; 5, Develop state and local partnerships; 6. Establish general Federal policy and responsibilities; 7.Identify model programs for Native American libraries and information services; 8. Develop museum and archival services for preserving Native American cultures; 9. Encourage adult and family literacy programs, basic job skills training, and strengthen tribal community colleges; 10. Encourage Application of

newer information network technologies (USNCLIS, 1992, pp. 9-20).

The public's view of Native Americans may be stilted by the recent success that some of the tribes have had at gaming casinos. In these instances, enormous wealth is being realized with a commensurate positive effect on institutional growth (Johnson, 1995). This newly found glamour hides the incidence of poverty, low educational attainment, and social dysfunction that continue to exist on less fortunate reservations. Added to the list of woes, is a recent transplant from the city--the development of gangs (Mydans, 1995).

The Public Library and Adult Services

While the following comment was voiced 45 years ago, it typifies--in this author's view the present status of the public library in efforts at adult education.

> The public library, then, has not become either a major center of formally organized adult education under its own initiative, nor does it serve as the officially designated library for the major agencies of formal adult education. Nevertheless, to the extent its means, in terms of materials and skilled personnel, the libraries provide opportunity for many men and women individually or organized into formal groups to continue their education as adults. In this sense it furnishes the essential library service for the host of activities and efforts which have somewhat romantically been called the peoples' university (Leigh,1950, pp. 107-108).

The above view should not be interpreted as an indictment of the public library, particularly in the light of the fact--as noted earlier--that adult education is far more complicated as a field of inquiry than it might appear to be. Historically, the typical public library has attempted providing a variety of different products and services. These ultimately were conceptualized into three basic types: educational, recreational, and informational. And while the public library has always recognized the adult client as a major benefactor of planning activities, the over the 18 crowd has taken the proverbial back seat to services for children. Unknowingly, (because public librarians have not been very good systematic observers of client use) the library has come to be perceived as a place for children (and women), whose role was discussed earlier. Perhaps, this institutional identity has not been exclusively children oriented, but there is no hiding the fact that summer storyhours for kids and programs for children usually generate enthusiastic lines of young users. Why they do not necessarily maintain that enthusiasm for the library throughout the various stages of adulthood is an issue in need of some thought and investigation.

While services for children have been burgeoning, reinforced by hungry appetites for more, programs articulated for adults, in the past, have frequently generated few takers. Adults, it appears, have other things to do. Viewing movies, reading newspapers and other materials, participating in social organizations and volunteer groups, taking care of families, etc., are among the variety of choices made available to the typical adult. The most enthusiastic librarian sometimes hesitates at the thought of preparing yet another program that reaches few "non-kids." As a

consequence, librarians have backed away from scheduling adult programs. Parenthetically, while this is an atypical example, this author is familiar with an effort at programming where the librarian in charge forgot to attend.

Adding further to this adult programming malaise is the fact, that while library staff members talk about employing marketing techniques in their efforts of identifying constituencies and their needs, they frequently lack the skills of conducting marketing programs. What develops, at best, are sporadic efforts at public relations. And many staff members have never organized any programs. The cost of programming is certainly another wildcard, but librarians have become quit adaptive at budget programming. Clearly, however, objectives can not be accomplished where there literally is no money available.

Despite the historical and present shortcoming associated with efforts to provide adult programming, it would be unfair and inaccurate to conclude that there has been no change over the last 45 years. Quite the contrary. In an effort to quickly update current perceptions about the extent to which public librarians are now providing adult education programming, this author phoned colleagues around the country who are primarily responsible for the management of library cooperatives/consortia. This was not a scientific investigation but rather an effort to take a snapshot of what was occurring. Parenthetically, this author also attempted to gather information from public librarians by sending out a request for information through a popular listserv (a discussion group) on the Internet. Interestingly, there were no electronic responses.

Although reports varied from those individuals contacted by phone, it appears that adult education is a "corner." Public librarians seem to be recognizing the need for expanding adult programming and services, and are "easing in to it." Activities pertaining to everything from great book discussions, computer classes (Adams, 1994), programs intended for business persons (Garrison, 1991), health services (Adams, 1995), events for those anticipating enrolling in programs of higher education, coincidental activities with, for example, Black History Month, literacy services of one kind or another (Rachel 1993; Rodriguez & Tejeda, 1993), travel related events for retired persons/seniors, genealogy (Grice & Hart, 1990), suggest the continuum of different lifelong learning experiences being made available in public libraries around the United States. Additionally, there is also some incidence of lifelong learning services being offered through public libraries for support staff. In this latter example, the technique utilized is teleconferencing. Despite the strides that have been made, it would be appropriate to indicate, however, that it does not appear--as yet--that adult services have taken on the magnitude of replacing children's services as an institutional emphasis. But there is evidence of steady progress. Further, it should be noted that undoubtedly there is additional programming taking place on a national scale that has gone unreported. Rural librarians infrequently report their experiences in the library press.

In relation to offering adult services in cooperation with other community agencies, again, while there is some incidence of this occurring--with literacy agencies, Small Business Development Centers, Cooperative Extension Services--one

does not perceive that the typical community library has an action plan at the local level for this to happen. In the view of this author, there is still a great deal of posturing when individuals talk about cooperation, as opposed to the real thing. Again, one is sanguine about this changing for the better. An interesting example of this has been stimulated by the Arizona State Library that has helped to develop Economic Development Information Centers [EDICs] in public libraries. These, in turn, have initiated cooperative projects with other groups (Miele & Welch, 1995).

Before concluding, the author would like to return to the spirit of Leigh's comment quoted at the beginning of this section pertaining to the supportive role that public librarians play in relation, for example, to providing resources for activities orchestrated by other groups. A significant trend with which this author is familiar has to do with the increased use of the local public library by students who are enrolled into programs of higher education--and not necessarily in that community. It appears that these individuals are expecting that the local public library provide course materials needed for their studies. While noted earlier that there has been little dispute about the importance of the public library being a source for educational matters, what is now occurring, however, is the local public library beings asked to act instead of the academic library. This presents an interesting new dilemma on whether or not to defer scarce resources to purchase expensive materials that have a short shelf life.

Truly, the wildcard in all of this effort to assess the present and particularly the future role of the public library as a source for lifelong learning relates to the

ongoing development and application of technology. For example, Bell Atlantic has received permission from the courts to offer video dialtone services, that is, video over phone lines (Landler, 1995), the Internet is developing in such a frenzy the everyone seems to want to have access to it--including the most rural community (Wildstrom, 1994), and personal computer manufacturers have finally succeeded in augmenting the home market as never before through multi-media packaging--CD-ROM (Armstrong, 1994).

It is the author's view, however, that communities are no better off with random acts of connectivity, despite how charming or forward looking they may appear, than they were in the past if their is an absence of community action. "...it wouldn't surprise us to see the 'global internet' find one of its best uses is as a low-cost channel for providers to make truly relevant local information available electronically" (Miller, 1995, p. 6). Wilkinson (1992) has expressed the view, however, that technology has both the potential to rescue geographically remote areas from economic and social problems or to break the backs of communities struggling to exist. His major concern is that there is a crisis of community. Rural towns may cease being communities, with the capacity for development and growth, and become nodes on a network. Parenthetically, it is not only rural America that is concerned about its future. Goldberger (1995) in discussing the development of malls in White Plains, New York, comments "But the real issues here [about malls] are not architectural. They involve the notion of public space in our time, and the declining role of cities as we have known them" (p. 28).

Areas of Needed Research

Clearly, this has been a challenging paper because of its scope. Using it as a preface, one would like to suggest the following research agenda for Federal action. Items are listed in order of importance as perceived by this author:

1. What is the present and long-range impact on the people in a rural or small community who have access to the services of a public library? Likewise, what is the impact where there is no library?

2. How much does it add to the success and value of a public library to have available the services of an academically trained librarian?

3. What circumstances would help to overcome the limited availability of academically trained staff in America's public libraries?

4. What perceptions do adults have relative to the public library as a resource for lifelong learning? What are the ingredients for improving library services?

5. What conditions or circumstances would encourage community agencies and institutions to more actively share resources and services? What is the librarian's role as a community leader?

6. In what manner may information services provided for Native Americans be improved?

7. To what extent have rural and small communities utilized electronic information services for improving infrastructure? What models exist?

8. What circumstances would insure that the public library is the focal point of the virtual community?

Conclusions

Historically, the public library movement has developed without a clear and coherent agenda of research activities at the national level. This has been a costly weakness. NIPELLL is to be commended for its leadership role in correcting this long-standing fault. The efforts of Barbara Humes, Leader, Libraries and Community-Based Education Team, are to be particularly complimented.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Public Libraries and Community-Based Education:
Making the Connection for Lifelong Learning

PANEL BRIEF
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Current Practice & Potential: Research & Adult Education in Museums

To give a brief sketch of the kinds of adult programming offered in museums today, I must start by emphasizing that in a short paper, only the broadest of generalizations are possible. For every point I suggest as "typical," there are probably more exceptions than adherents. However, because this is a field of extraordinary variety in programs, audiences, and institutional settings, a few common features may help give a sense of the state of the art currently.

I should also make it clear that, while I have gained valuable new insights into the breadth and complexity of educational practice in museums since joining the staff of the American Association of Museums several months ago, my comments today are based in my individual experience as an adult educator, mainly in art and history, over about twenty years, and represent only my own opinion.

The Institutional Context of Adult Programs in Museums

Several common circumstances influence the development of educational programs for adults in museums across the country.

Some of these factors were important in establishing what became "typical" forms of programming in the past, which have left their vestigial mark on current practice. Some of these conditions are still essential and characteristic aspects of museum culture today.

Above all, any account of adult education in museums must take account of an exceptional degree of institutional diversity across the range of museums. Consider the fact that the term "museums" encompasses a range of subject matter from art, of every era from Prehistory to the present, natural science and technology, history, specialized hobbyist topics, and many others. Museums preserve, study, display, and interpret live elephants, eyeglasses, Czarist filigree eggs, video art, barns, war plunder, butterfly wings, and everything in between. As used today, the term denotes history, art, and science museums of all sorts, multi-disciplinary "general" museums, aquariums, botanical gardens, historical sites, art centers, youth museums, commemorative monuments, archives and special library collections, even exhibition areas in countless parent institutions.

There is no such thing as a usual form of governance and organizational type among museums. Museums are formed and operated by all levels of government (federal, state, regional, inter-jurisdictional, and local). Many museums are private in origin and run by independent boards according to a wide range of chartered purposes, while providing varying services to the

general public. Still other museums are operated as subsidiaries or special services by universities and colleges, non-profit organizations or private associations, religious bodies, foundations, or even businesses or professional organizations. The governing authority and institutional origins of a museum can have a wide variety of direct and indirect implications for its style of educational services. For the current purpose, suffice it to say that whether or not a museum is "public" or "private," whether it is independent or part of a parent organization will very often effect its relationship to actual and potential audiences. It may well also influence whether, and how smoothly, it collaborates with other institutions (other museums and counterparts such as libraries, campuses and school systems, civic organizations, service clubs, etc.)

Finally, museums exercise both great variety in approach to the public they serve, often developing complex relations with many distinct or overlapping audience groups. Some museums, whether private or public, located in the nation's capital or not, by law or tradition, are truly national or international in the scope of the public they serve. This can be said of museums as otherwise different as the National Air and Space Museum (D.C.), the Museum of Modern Art (NYC), the Oriental Institute (Chicago), and the San Diego Zoo. Obviously, this does not mean they are providing the same educational programs to all members of this expansive clientele. Their adult programs may include only in-house events at the museum, or they may reach into some

other communities as outreach, packaged audio-visual presentations, or travel opportunities. Most, but by no means all museums, give some degree of priority to the communities of their geographic location. In most cases, museums recognize a need to serve several different circles of community, geographically speaking, in one way or another. Some museums have defined their range of service through direct experience and common sense. For example, one might aim to serve the residents of a tri-state, 12-county region which is reasonably accessible by car. It is not unusual for a museum to identify its base community, ad hoc, as the people who live closer to it than to the next institution that could provide similar exhibits, curricular support, or programming. Sometimes that means several museums "divide" their educational services, informally speaking, with counterparts within a city; in other cases, a zoo or historical art museum may strive to offer substantive programs, one way or another, to interested people living hundreds of miles away, because no comparable institution exists for great distances. It is common to ask, "if we do this for immediate neighborhood residents, and that for the lunch-time working crowd, what can we provide, at least occasionally, for the people who will drive four hours to see our unique display of Mid-western fossils?" A number of museums, some "public," some "private" are mandated to focus on educational services for the legally defined, municipal area (city and suburbs) which jointly provide a tax-based contribution to their budget. By charter or tradition, some museums focus

primarily on quite specific constituencies, for example, the students, staff, and alumni of a college, or the members of a religious faith or ethnic group.

Yet another factor is the frequent presence of members' groups within museums. Sometimes members receive only discounts on the cost of generally available services, including educational programs; other museums offer special programs for members only. In many museums, subsidiary members' auxiliaries themselves offer or sponsor adult education opportunities.

If one generalization can be made about the educational character of museum programs for adults, as compared to the offerings of other kinds of institutions serving mature audiences, it must certainly be that personal enrichment (variously defined), rather than acquisition of practical information or specific useful skills, is the common goal of both most learners and program developers. The themes and factual content presented in museum programs may have significant application in participants' lives, as, for example, when they deal with issues of health, social order, family life, technology, and so on. However, it would be very rare to find an adult attending an event or series to acquire job-training or improved literacy. This may be largely a matter of defining the needs and interests of the adult audience(s) in question, because many more museums do tackle aspects of practical education for children and adolescents, often in connection with local school curricula.

The means by which a museum identifies target audiences and builds its community base is a highly individual process which combines many factors: legal requirements, institutional culture and history, conscious marketing efforts, the character of its collections, the proximity of comparable exhibits and programs, the interests and talents of staff, the need to generate income, and trends in community politics. My sense is that the extent to which museums vary in the scale and range of their natural and targeted constituencies is unusual among educational institutions. They are simultaneously location-specific and expansive in the scope of their communities. Unlike library systems, museums don't as a rule have branches or a local network. Unlike large service associations, they don't have local chapters for the dissemination or replication of programs. But, at the same time, if a museum's collections and related educational program are unique and the subject of widespread interest, then its audience (actual and potential) is likely to be national at least. Every museum I have ever had considerable experience with has been in the continual or episodic process of re-evaluating its core constituencies, and usually, also tailoring services, including education, to selected sub-sets with those communities.

In addition to institutional factors that effect the development of adult education in museums, there is another set of characteristics that have long influenced programming. They mostly fall into two related categories: 1) With some special

exceptions, museums, almost by definition, base their mission on the exhibition and interpretation of things, whether artifacts, specimens, works of art, and 2) museums usually combine research and educational dissemination as dual, essential functions. Any one of the following points could lead to interesting philosophical or didactic discussion. For the sake of this short essay, we should simply make note of the implications of the following factors for the development of educational programming:

Originally, the basic rationale for educational interpretation in museums was the elucidation for the public of the specific institutional collections on display. That is, education was by definition, object-based. Though types of programming have broadened over time to encompass the general subject matter of a museum's collections, the ideas that have grown out of research into collections, the holdings of other similar institutions, and such, the emphasis in museum interpretation is still on real objects. This obviously influences the choice of program subject matter in a given case. It also tends to emphasize certain concepts, such as the experience of "the real thing", and learning approaches, such as assisted investigation methods based on observation and inquiry.

The next major factor in the institutional is that museums generally commit great thought, effort, and resources to the systematic public presentation of objects in exhibitions. As a result, educational programming is often driven by interest in, and promotion of, whichever shows are currently on view, are new,

or are most promising for any given audience. Two other points are relevant here: Exhibitions are not neutral displays of groups of artifacts; they have considerable interpretive content themselves. The interpretive approach of the exhibition itself will tend to influence the thematic contact of related adult programs, though not necessarily determine it completely. Finally, the duration of exhibitions is a constant consideration in program development. A short show may not provide time for the planning, promotion and completion of substantive educational programs, especially when several different temporary shows may run simultaneously. So, it is not unusual for educators to skip whole topics of interest covered in exhibitions for logistical reasons alone. On the other hand, when a major exhibition ends, an entire slate of educational offerings based on it may become suddenly obsolete. This is especially true of workshops and gallery talks which are directly founded on interpretation of the displayed specimens themselves.

Related to both the centrality of exhibitions in museums and the patterns of use by visitors, a great many education programs are occasional or solitary in nature. Experience in practice is that most adults visit a museum, or a given exhibition, just once. They may come for a specific program, or discover the option of attending an educational event only when they get there. There are numerous cases of on-going lecture series (4 in a season, or weekly for years) and of hands-on workshops offered in an extended series. Still, the one-time event and the

limited, episodic program is the most common format for educational programs. The fact that an appreciable number of participants travel a significant distance to attend a program (across the city, or across the state) is part of this. So is the changeable character of the materials on exhibit. Related to these patterns of use is the fact that many visitors are interested in museums for the museum itself, and may never have been there before. Therefore, institutional orientation and background is frequently desired as a part of such occasional interpretive programs. Many museum educators feel circumscribed in program planning by how little information can be shared, or how few concepts can be developed, within a single talk, tour, workshop or activity. At the same time, the constant arrival of new faces means that opportunities for certain kinds of programs, especially interactive participation based on established rapport, are rare.

Museums are knowledge-rich resources. It is common for the regular staff to include resident experts on various topics. Often these are curators responsible for supervision of the collections and related research. In addition, other members of staff, guest curators of special exhibitions, board members, retired professionals serving in a volunteer capacity, visiting scholars, and others, create a concentration of learnedness and intellectual interest around museums. Many museums maintain a specialized library or research facility, over and above the collections themselves, which are a magnet for knowledgeable

people while providing materials for program ideas and development. Therefore, museums are often in enviable circumstances to design educational programs of richness and depth, using the knowledge of the institutional circle and calling upon the experts to present programs themselves. Beyond sheer information and ideas, this can involve the rewarding experience of sharing personal enthusiasm between leader and audience. At the same time, the interests of the staff scholars and others are closely linked to the special strengths of particular museums in collections and exhibitions. In turn, the long-evolved specialties of a given museum and its personnel tend to determine to a large extent the overall direction of educational programs for the public. This is a separate dynamic from the actual or potential interests of the public audience(s), which may or may not coincide. It is only in the past three or four years (as a rough estimate from memory) that one occasionally hears museum professionals seriously deliberating in public about selecting research and collecting priorities in part in response to the expressed cultural or educational interests of community constituencies. At the best, a strong museum with attractive programming builds on the interests of its audiences with its best intellectual resources, so that the two complement each other. Even with the best of responsive, well-designed programs, however, it is easy to imagine anomalies between the particular resources of a museum and a "typical" local audience, if, hypothetically, the exhibitions and programs repeatedly

featured obscure art-forms, numerous specimens of visually similar hand tools, or unique, but conceptually difficult or specialized subjects. Some museums simply have a clearer juxtaposition of their research and educational roles than others.

In terms of public expectations, the expertise associated with museums may have one more implication for adult programs. Personal experience and the comments of colleagues over the years suggests that in the museum environment, more than anywhere except, perhaps, a university classroom, many program participants expect to hear "the last word" or "the truth" about a subject. Not infrequently, programs designed as participatory discussions or interactive workshops by energetic museum educators turn into more traditional presentations as attenders defer to the authority of the principal presenters. Responses to a letter of inquiry sent out to gather comments from colleagues in preparation for this essay were a chorus of concern about the challenge of overcoming polite passivity and frequent hesitation about active interaction among adult learners.

Lastly, yet one more atmospheric circumstance seems to influence the development of adult programming. This is a direct result of the audience(s)'s perception of museums, individually and as a category of cultural institutions. Many museums enjoy considerable social prestige, due to a combination of cultural attitudes. They are respected as civic, scholarly, and educational institutions. They house and display rare,

interesting, and often costly objects. They are frequently associated with past and present leaders of the community, and with prosperity and affluence. They are the site of publicized and sometimes exclusive social events. They are frequently attractive places to visit, and many have official or unofficial stature as community showcases. Sizable museums especially have a high profile as local institutions and tourist destinations. Overall, this prestige definitely attracts visitors and program participants. However, potent cultural connotations cut both ways. The actual social ambiance and traditional reputation of museums can be daunting or off-putting, as well as appealing. Some people will feel "at home" in a museum and others will not. Associations of class and race are obvious. Other subtler considerations or feelings may also lead audiences and individuals to self-select themselves in ways that are not predictable. And, even when a museum concertedly determines to serve new constituencies and acts to meet that goal, old ideas about the museum may reside in the community for years. Finally, institutional prestige can effect the educational experience itself: awesomeness can contribute to certain kinds of learning and detract from others.

Program Development in Practice

A brief description of how educational programs for adults are commonly initiated may be a useful. It should be said that in the past decade or so, a number of significant changes have

resonated across the field, and this sketch is an oversimplification only for the purpose of identifying a few key points in the process:

Before saying anything else, one circumstance is crucial. Virtually all educational programs in museums are initiated in-house by the staff of the museum (or closely associated contractors). Furthermore, both single events and comprehensive program plans for an entire roster of public programs, serving different interest groups and ages, concerning different topics in different formats, are developed in-house in each separate museum. Educators do check into major schedule conflicts with other local institutions. Sometimes several agencies in one area will organize programs around a common theme or event of shared interest, such as a historical centennial, but coordination is often limited to dividing up the array by audience, calendar, or approach. Colleagues from a museum and a local campus, civic center, and other counterparts may collaborate from time to time. But there is no comprehensive system for the sharing of program ideas between museums, and few on-going program committees cross institutional lines. In part, this is simply customary practice, not to say habit; in part it is the result of chronic crises of tight deadlines which push educators into rapid, solo, or in-house program planning. Not surprisingly, the most important cause is probably the discrete, object-based and exhibition-based nature of much educational programming. In work habits, many museum educators are characteristically extroverted and

collegial, doing lots of informal collegial networking and support. This does not carry over directly into specific program planning very often, however. It is indicative that even several museums hosting the same exhibition on tour will usually not develop educational materials or programs together. I have only been involved in one such collaborative workshop, in advance of an exhibition's national circulation. It occurred last year, and was motivated directly by the chief foundation funder of the traveling exhibition.

Assume that a museum is expecting to open a major permanent exhibition, that is, one that will be on display for a year or more, starting in six months, a year, or more. The broad subject of the exhibition, mid-eastern archeology, world mineralogy, or 20th century painting, for example, have a wide range of interpretive possibilities, as well as points of interest for many different potential audiences.

Until very recently, I think it is fair to say that educators planning programs for voluntary participation by adults most often began first, almost as a given, with the exhibition and the subject it suggested, or with the collections priorities of their institutions (such as interpretation of recent acquisitions). The next stage was to decide how best to present the predetermined topic for the most likely audience or audiences. This is still a common chain of action in museums, all or some of the time. However, in disparate and diverse institutions there does seem to be a widespread trend toward

reversing these considerations, targeting particular audiences, new and established, and then striving to tailor interesting and stimulating educational programs, based on the tangible and intellectual resources of the museum, to suit the characteristics of each group. Running in tandem is an increased attention to varied learning styles, community surveys, audience assessment, representative advisory groups, and other tools for informed understanding of a museum's educational constituency. In practice, the methods of such inquiry fluctuate widely in sophistication, but the overall trend is evident and encouraging.

Locating and Using Professional Resource Materials

Finding professional resource materials to assist in program development is largely an ad hoc business in museum education. There is no firmly established core literature in the field, generally speaking, and no organized compendia of model programs. Informal networking is the currency of exchange in museum education, and colleagues do benefit from mutual advice and shared brochures. Sample materials from education events, such as program notes, grant narratives, and institutional newsletters circulate widely upon request. However, very different programs and approaches can sound very similar in summary description, and shared materials less often are accompanied by explanatory rationales, critical self-assessments of completed programs, or other evaluative review. Simply put, possible format options and

some practical tips are communicated informally more readily than deliberation or wisdom. Recent developments in the area of systematic program evaluation are a significant advance in professional education in museums, but I believe that it is too early to say that such research and analysis have filtered into the main stream of communications. (More about such research studies below.)

At professional meetings, traditionally, the standard format of sessions is the showcase of successful projects by proud organizers. While analytic sophistication and comprehensive thinking tend to be thin at museum conferences, existing practice does have the merit of getting the word out about outstanding approaches to educational programming, among other areas of museology, and spot-lighting innovators in the field. The main practical problem is that virtually none of these meetings are documented except in ephemeral handouts and audio-tapes, so that the information dies quickly except by word-of-mouth. The deeper problem is that program reports from the podium generally follow the institutionally isolated and episodic characteristics of museum programming, follow-up over time is virtually non-existent, and comparative analysis is rare. Therefore, the usefulness of the information is limited, short-lived, and usually directed toward immediate application in other sites.

One of the most demanding challenges, and a challenge that both excites and frustrates educational practitioners in museums, is that of mastering the subject matter of educational programs

sufficiently to play a truly formative role in the sound, interpretive content of programs. Museum educators often act in the role of program facilitation, arranging for presentations by others, while at other times they want or need to serve as instructors or program leaders themselves. In either case, implementation beyond strictly pro forma logistics requires a solid grasp of a subject, including knowledge of intellectual issues current in a given field. In the best of cases, educational research prior to program development comprises both the investigation of audience characteristics and format options, and the comprehension of scholarly knowledge and opinion relevant to the topic at hand. However, logistical realities of public programming jobs in museums, the intellectual experience of individual educators within a specific discipline, the range of available resources (especially in locations outside of major urban centers), and other factors are a frequent problem in this area. I know of very few educators, myself included, who feel confident on a regular basis that they are prepared for this aspect of their preparatory or instructional work. It is a fact of life in museums, however surprising, that even in knowledge-based institutions, professional staff members do not necessarily have access to <u>any</u> in-house, local, or regional research library or related services. Many colleagues use such a facility only if alumni status happens to entitle them to user privileges at a local college, or if their public library offers significant interlibrary loans services with connections to a research

collection. Besides improving access to scholarly tomes or major journal articles, or assisting on-line bibliographic searches, another less immediate possibility comes to mind. Museum (and other community-based) educators could benefit from gradual development of a new category of professional literature: articles or booklet studies that address the educational interpretation itself of broad areas of cultural, scientific, and other studies, emphasizing the emergence of conceptual issues and prevailing themes of interest, as well as relevance to public audiences. Imagine for instance, a brisk, comparative study of programs which treat dilemmas of bio-ethics, or the solid waste crisis, or post-modern culture, in five community-based, collaborative or independently derived institutional settings across the country. I suppose this wishful vision is a plea for integrative writing which bridges the gap between subject disciplines and thoughtful public interpretation.

Barriers to Program Development and Expansion

Though it might be possible to exaggerate their effect, the main barriers to educational program development for adults in museums seem to be fairly straight-forward: 1) Budget pressure on museums, which is nothing new, makes educational programs in particular economically problematic. Outside funding is uncertain, and general operating budgets cannot often afford to subsidize offerings. Modest user fees must completely support the program, or even earn net revenue for the institution. As

both perception and reality, innovation and risk are discouraged by economic concern; 2) Also as a function of budget, education staffs tend to be short-handed and over-extended in relation to the number of events they present and the number of people they serve. The two most serious casualties are freshness and responsive flexibility in new program development and improvement. Chronic lack of opportunities for much, if any, "R & D" suppresses adaptability, change, and currency in the content and form of programs.

In addition, several factors tend to act as disincentives to program development in museums in particular: 1) Changing exhibitions, leading to the frequent re-tooling of educational programs, produces a Sisyphean challenge for educators who are constantly starting over, tackling a new, perhaps unfamiliar subject, and encountering little opportunity for long-term refinement of programs; 2) Except for curatorial personnel, who in some museums, especially smaller ones, may have a direct role in educational program development, many educators are not trained specialists in the subjects they inherit from exhibitions and collections as the basis of much of their institution's adults programs. Even less likely are they to be truly expert in the specific content of a show. As a result, they are often playing "running catch-up" to glean enough information and knowledge of the topic at hand to draft a program plan, identify visiting speakers, and so on. Locally available resource materials in libraries or elsewhere may not be adequate to the

purpose; 3) Traditionally, and recently reconfirmed by Goals 2000 and other initiatives which emphasize education for youth, adult audiences are often given second priority, relative to children, in sharing the limited resources of museum education departments. Also, the majority of educators have much more experience or training with school-aged audiences than with adults; 4) For a long time, the expectation in many museums that educators restrict themselves to derivative re-interpretation of ideas determined by curator/scholars, rather than developing new conceptual approaches, had a demoralizing impact on public programmers and encouraged interpretive conservatism. Conditions have changed considerably over a generation, but the vestiges of the past can still be felt in instances of interpretive reticence, including a sometimes erratic willingness of museums to take their educational lead from the interests of actual and potential participants.

With regard to the expansion of existing programs for adults, and the development of new offerings for expanding audiences, most of the same conditions apply. Though most educators recognize (with affection) the faces of recurrent program participants, and many museums offer a core of reliable programs that predictably please their audiences (and generate income), museum programs always seems to be "starting over" with new topics, new attenders. It requires a larger core audience than many museums have to establish educational opportunities that assume cumulative knowledge over time. Therefore, except

where subject matter varies enough to sustain interest, there is the constant temptation of recurrent attenders to "drop out" as repeat visitors. There is also a major, if invisible, limit to the size of audiences (actual and theoretical) in use of the museum as the main program site. Whenever a program is dependent upon gathering at a single, fixed location, especially on a single, one-chance date, this discourages or excludes a considerable proportion of people who otherwise might be "potential attenders" (due to cost, time, lack of public transportation, inconvenient location, etc.). The alternatives, notably off-site outreach and the use of new media, are beyond the economic resources of all but the largest and most secure museums. The former, in fact, has decreased very markedly in recent years. Add to this the over-extension of staff and the risk-adverse caution of economically stressed institutions, and it becomes very difficult to advocate and rally the resources required in advance to expand programs and mount new ones. As a gross generalization, the issue does not seem to be the absolute limit on the size of potential audiences. Programs of good quality, responsively based on market surveys or intuitive assessment to determine public demand, do continue to bring out growing program attendance at all manner of museums.

Barriers to reaching potential users, and especially non-traditional adult audiences to museum programs, include the kinds of logistical circumstances listed above. The isolated institutional origination of programs tends to restrict

widespread awareness of programs; if a potential participant is not familiar with the museum, he/she is even less likely to make note of its programs. The regular replacement of one new set of topics and programs by another mitigates against gradual development of any new audience. Audience surveys have long suggested that familiarity with the museum, combined with word-of-mouth recommendations of a program, are essential to motivating attendance. Both of these factors favor growth among established audiences, but do little to encourage newcomers who lack a personal connection with the museum by direct experience or through a friend. Getting the word out about available programs is still a common problem, but mere information does not seem to be the crux of the issue.

In the past decade, across the country, many museums have become more attuned to community responsiveness. Among other steps, they have established local advisory boards representing many contingencies, especially under-represented population groups, within the museum. Some education departments have their own audience committees, made up of teachers, active volunteers, professional peers from other educational agencies, and individual or delegated representatives from ethnic minority groups, major local employers, and "ordinary attenders". Beyond sheer good will, many such advisors serve the double role of suggesting ways to make welcome new participants in the museum, while leading the way, it is hoped, as the personal link who may

encourage first-time attendance by individuals who know or feel affinity with them.

Perhaps coming full circle, the attractiveness to new potential users of a museum's core programming, usually artifact-based in a greater or a lesser extent, is a continual underlying issue. Certainly many lectures, walking tours, and hands-on activities of all sorts are offered, which are more broadly conceptualized than strictly defined commentary on the collected objects at hand. A museum of art may present concerts or talks associated only by period and cultural origin with a work or works on view in the gallery. A botanical garden may offer a lively cooking course based on seasonal produce or indigenous eatables. A hypothetical state history museum, with collections still only representing its mainstream cultural components, could launch a participatory oral history project reaching out to much wider circles within the community. By no means does adult education have to be limited to gallery tours, nor is it. At some point in the outward interpretive extension of programming, however, the original basis of museum education upon institutional (or borrowed) collections comes into question. If the unique educational circumstance of museums is the opportunity to encounter "the real thing," then eventually someone in the museum, whether a curator, a funder, an educator, or a member of a programs audience, questions the rationale for straying too far from objects and exhibitions. Frankly, I am a "liberal" on this continuum of professional opinion; I tend to support even very

loose connections with the contents of the galleries, if the programming is substantive, in keeping with the general mission of the institution, and is intellectually satisfying to the audience. The dilemma arises when two separate concerns, both quite legitimate, collide: 1) What should a museum do to expand programming to new potential users, whether more numerous "typical" attenders, or members of new audience groups, when the content of the collections and institutional focus seems to be the (or a) significant factor in restraining the level of interest among potential users, and 2) if collections and exhibitions are one of the defining aspects of museums, per se, what is the justification of using museum resources to mount educational programs that are not related to either specific artifacts, or the special experience of "the real thing" more generally? Assuming that a campus, library, or television can provide alternatives, what is the role of a museum in such educational opportunities? This conundrum, which virtually every museum faces at some point, is probably not more compelling than other logistical or social constraints on reaching potential users, but it is an unresolved issue that influences how museums internally address educational policy and strategy.

To balance the oversimplified impression of adult programs which I have given, many examples of alternative programs in museums demonstrate a higher level of collaboration between institutions. There are also numerous instances of interactive

interpretation based on the contributions of local communities and public participants themselves:

The Terra Museum of American Art in Chicago, collaborates on a continuing basis with the Chicago Department on Aging and the Chicago Cultural Center to provide in-house and outreach programs for the elderly.

The West Bend Gallery of Fine Arts, in Wisconsin, developed "Cultural Collections," a major public event to accentuate its exhibition of Navajo arts, in collaboration with several local organizations including the public library.

A number of museums, including the Chicago Historical Society, regularly provide extended courses (one week or longer) under the aegis of Elderhostel, which is well-recognized for its national network of travel and program options, in every conceivable field, for adults over age 55.

At the Albany Institute of History and Art, members of the general public are invited to the museum to share memories of significant historical periods during their lifetimes, sparked by a few selected, evocative artifacts available in the room. Similar "memory days" and "oral witness" programs have been carried out at the Chicago Historical Society and elsewhere.

A number of museums (from zoos to historical societies to art museums) have well-established "singles" groups, where adults can gather to meet socially and share common educational interests. Some of these specialize in specific age segments of the adult population. These groups are often very flexible in

program development, with input or leadership from participants, and many are formatted as congenial "forums" for dialogue and exchange of perspectives.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art, with a full range of art lectures and other programs, has structured a tiered system for historical and aesthetic presentations, encouraging self-selection of attenders according to their level of interest and knowledge.

To surpass the symbolic and commemorative aspects of public history, The Valentine Museum in Richmond, Virginia, has mounted a series of scholarly symposia including active members of the public, in which participants discuss current ideas in history and changes in the emerging views of events in the past, before being asked to comment upon the content and interpretative approach of the museum's exhibitions and programs.

The Colorado Historical Society (which does have sites throughout the state) and the Brattleboro Museum, VT, both have popular series in which attenders hear from and meet local or visiting authors. Such projects are frequently sponsored by, or are an active collaboration with, local bookstores.

The Science Museum of Minnesota (St. Paul) uses improvisational theater performances to interpret their exhibition "Hunters of the Sky" about birds of prey. The interactive program provokes intense exchange with adults (and children) on questions such as environmental priorities and human

vs. animal rights. Interpretive theater constitutes one of the most interesting recent waves in museum programming.

The Smithsonian Institution's Resident Associates Program has developed perhaps the largest and most comprehensive array of adult lectures, seminar, workshops, field-trips and other programs for its extraordinary "Campus on the Mall." This selection of hundreds of on-site and off-site programs comprises everything from multi-perspective interpretation of key exhibitions to forums for discussion of topical issues like the role of national journalism or the significance of feminist interpretations of society. It covers the full range from object-based learning to broad themes in cultural studies.

Research in the Field of Museum Education

Museum education as a professional field is not yet mature in either the application or generation of relevant research. Until very recently, a decade or less, the short-term, highly individualized educational programs of independent museums have rarely, if ever, interested educational researchers usually concerned with schools and other mainstream educational institutions. Ours is an exceptionally interdisciplinary profession, which embraces not only the subject fields of the museums' focus, but also educational studies, behavioral science, interpretation theory, cultural studies, urban planning, intellectual history, American Studies, and the budding methodologies of museology, to name only a few. As a result, the

basic terms of reference for systematic professional research and discourse are still so fragmented as to inhibit widespread participation. Practitioners whose primary intellectual language comes from ecological science or post-modern aesthetics can have real difficulty in dialogue with each other, or with a statistical program assessment researcher, an educational theorist, or an interpretive content analyst. None of us yet has enough experience decrypting concepts and terms across the board to be able to converse fluently with our own research colleagues on a regular basis. One unfortunate outgrowth of this is a slightly irritated, territorial tendency to mistrust the methods, standards of evidence, and conclusions from other fields, or simply to declare one's own most familiar discipline the "real" discipline of museum education.

Another reason for the general dearth of useful studies of educational theory and practice in museums has to do with the constitution of the profession in the past, and to a great extent today. Many museum educators entered into their career precisely because they found exciting the hands-on interpretation of interesting material in direct contact with the public. It is an easily misconstrued oversimplification, but with an important kernel of truth to say that, given the proximate alternative of a museum career emphasizing research in the curatorial area, educators often chose to be educators in order to be direct interpreters and educational practitioners. Research, whether of artifacts or educational practice, was, therefore, unlikely to

have been a priority in their conception of their careers when they began. I am not surprised that a growing interest in research coincides with, among other things, the mid-career phase of the first really professional generation of museum educators. With experience to bank on and a broad vision of continuing questions and issues, they are prepared to take on in-depth work of this kind.

At least as important, the ever-changing, episodic nature of program development in museums has undercut the feasibility of practitioners themselves undertaking on-going research into audience behavior, programmatic models, learning theory in museums, or other possible topics beyond the scope of a single, short-term educational program. It is also still the case that rewards and recognition for research in museum education are not part of a practitioner's job, nor does undertaking research appear as an asset on most annual performance appraisals. In recent years, some indications of greater interest within the museum field concerning educational research, in various forms, are becoming evident. For some time, the Visitor's Studies Association, an independent organization of audience, program evaluation, and allied researchers based in Jacksonville, AL, has sponsored regular symposia, produced a newsletter, and published a research annual. A standing professional committee of the American Association of Museums, the Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation, is active in promoting, supporting, and presenting studies of high quality in the areas its name

designates. In 1990, under the aegis of Museum Education Roundtable, an independent membership association of museum educators, I was able to inaugurate a modest peer-reviewed, open-submission colloquium for the presentation and discussion of papers in all fields relevant to museum education, broadly defined. Now in its fifth year, it has attracted proposals from all over the country, and internationally (list attached). Submissions are, of course, uneven. As indicated by the proposals themselves and the comments of participants, there also remains real confusion about the perimeters of the field of study and the basic characteristics of a developed research project. This is a predictable part of the gradual maturation of a nascent cluster of interrelated disciplines. Simultaneously, the overall level of inquiry is rising.

Meanwhile, a few museums, including a children's museum in Philadelphia (Please Touch Museum) employ a senior researcher in a regular staff position. With major support from the William Penn Foundation, the same institution recently launched a multi-year, multi-dimensional study of early childhood learning on its site, in cooperation with Harvard University's Project Zero. The "Research Review on Learning in Early Childhood" prepared as part of that project demonstrates how useful such analytical materials would be for educators working with all museum audiences. Such a model has not yet, to my knowledge, been extended to the study of adult learning experiences in museums, but we can hope for the future. Increasingly, major museums hire consultants, and a few

employ evaluators full-time, to carry out quantitative and qualitative evaluation at all stages of programmatic development.

At the Smithsonian Institution, the Office of Institutional Studies carries out research into institutional programs and practice, as well as providing methodological advice to S. I. professionals, visiting fellows, and external colleagues for their studies. In 1994-5, the Smithsonian Institution designated some of the proceeds of its Educational Outreach Fund, for a series of research awards to advance interdisciplinary educational studies by its staff. Also at the Smithsonian, the Center for Museum Studies (formerly: Office of Museum Programs) now compiles an on-line bibliography of dissertations potentially of interest to museum professionals, including, but not limited to educators, concerning museums and museology. The total of citations is now about one thousand, a huge jump in the last year or two. The same office has an annual, open-submission, peer-reviewed grant program to fund museum practitioners who wish to come to Washington for a research sojourn in some area of museum studies.

For the purpose of this essay, however, it is worth noting that only a small fraction of research projects in progress in the field concern adult audiences or programming issues relevant to learners beyond traditional, institutional schooling. Some examples are the Winterthur Museum's visitor study, "Learning How Visitors Learn," or the on-going work of Philip Yenawine and

Abigail Housen who are studying identifiable phases of aesthetic experience in adults at the Museum of Modern Art (NYC) and elsewhere. Minda Borun has designed several studies to investigate the naive notions about scientific facts which adult visitors bring with them to the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia.

As separate, focused studies begin to proliferate, the next task for the professional research community will be the development of a synthetic literature. This should begin with such still remarkably infrequent, though basic steps, as the development of comparative studies and the regular inclusion of literature reviews in each study. Clear articulation of concepts is also crucial, so that terminology may evolve through the dialectic refinement of cumulative research within and across the interdisciplinary lines of informal education and museology.

The progress of research in the field of community-based education, especially in museums, seems bound to be a concerted effort of several distinct professional communities: 1) educational practitioners in museums, 2) staff or consultant researchers working within museums, and 3) external scholars, especially academics, in the fields of education, sociology and anthropology, cultural studies, interpretation theory and others. The perspectives, objectives, language, and intellectual agenda of each group overlap, but each brings quite different emphases to the field. My hope is that study and dialogue will remain a dynamic, if somewhat messy, endeavor. In general, practitioners

need the model of solid and sophisticated methodology to help raise the analytical standard of their contributions. In-house staff and consultant researchers often combine intimate knowledge of the institutions they study with specialized research techniques. To date, however, they tend to come disproportionately from a limited range of disciplines, especially quantitative fields based in social science methodology. Scholars from universities and elsewhere who turn to museums as "laboratories" for study, or for the unique issues they present in social, cultural, or educational policy, bring a strong tradition of method and thought. Cumulatively, they illustrate the benefits of many disciplines and interdisciplinary approaches to the relevant questions. However, they are "visitors" in the realm of community education, and the ultimate priorities which guide research in museums and elsewhere should, I believe, continue to come primarily from within. This is important both for maintaining useful relevancy in the studies undertaken and to best represent the interests of the public clientele we serve. I think one of the most important, and difficult, tasks we have ahead for the field, in the next decade or so, is in the creation of a body of professional thought that incorporates both questions and knowledge about the philosophy (philosophies), analytical history, and intellectual theory of education in museums and other community-based institutions. Until we begin to do this, to a substantive degree, we are stuck with an entire conceptual foundation that is fuzzy and unstable,

to say the least. The current state of thought in the field renders us profoundly, but unconsciously, dependent upon derivative principles, only half understood within museums, from other, often dated scholarly and social arenas. I am concerned that in a period of marvelous information expansion, we do not let data collection too far outstrip concept formulation.

Beside the analytic study of topics in museum education, a more basic resource would be invaluable to facilitate better program development for adults. Because of the circumstances I have described, especially institutional independence and the ephemeral duration of most programs, there is no even remotely comprehensive repository of sample educational materials, program documentation, or video recordings of model programs. To collect, organize, and make available studies, research, and model materials concerning adult education in museums and collateral organizations would be an exhausting, but tremendously worthwhile, resource service for some central agency such as the Department of Education to undertake. The vertical files of existing graduate programs in museum education are neither adequate nor accessible. Earlier attempts to manage such a central resource were short-lived. Occasional discussions of such a service by other Federal agencies have not gone far, to my knowledge, and have repeatedly been caught on the differing disciplinary specializations of the National Science Foundation and the Endowments of Arts and Humanities, for instance.

Following discussions with the NIPELL conference panel, April 12-13, 1995, and identification of some common priorities among that impressive group, here are a few of my initial recommendations for promotion of improved and expanded informal adult education through research initiatives of the Department of Education:

Informal educators do learn from and apply ideas from successful programs when they become aware of them. So, improving access to centrally available documentation (reports, printed materials, assessments, videos) would be met with frequent, productive use by individual educators and institutions. Similarly, one authoritative resource agent needs to take responsibility for compiling some basic reference categories for organizing a wide range of otherwise ephemeral materials which originate in highly diverse circumstances: program documentation by institutional type, subject matter, audience type, and many other significant criteria, as determined by the functional use of educational practitioners. In particular, the field would benefit from systematic documentation of collaborative, non-traditional, and interactive programs, as categories, as well as proven strategies for expansion into services for new audiences.

Similarly, educators need a clearing-house for proliferating research studies in community-based and informal programming. Many or most of these studies are still in-house projects, seldom published and infrequently presented in a professional forum.

Access and exchange would be useful for practitioners designing comparable programs. It is a necessary condition for any development of comprehensive and comparative research from which broader principles of theory and practice can be derived over time. Mutual knowledge should also help raise the technical standards of methodologies as well. Making in-house studies widely available will require not only logistical provisions, but the persuasive power of the bully-pulpit to overcome a proprietary sense that institutional studies must remain confidential or strictly protected. Perhaps this will be the most difficult issue of all.

Focus groups might be encouraged to compile reading lists and recommended bibliographies to encourage development of a common professional literature, loosely speaking, and to identify excellent materials from the full range of relevant disciplines which inform museum education, community education, and allied activities. In my experience, nobody has the individual capacity to chart a course through all the possibilities. In addition, the uneven quality of research in any young field is a particular obstacle for those crossing disciplinary lines for information and ideas, and for newcomers or educators-in-training.

The Department of Education need not take on all aspects of research promotion itself. However, it should take all opportunities to encourage on-going forums for research presentations, in oral forum and publication. I think it will be most beneficial if such sessions are publicized and presented

both in general professional meetings, which practicing educators attend, and in specialized venues for researchers specifically.

Overall, I believe that visible, proactive effort in the field of community-based learning for adults will be valuable for its own sake. The very concept of integrating the results of reliable studies into the development of solid, interesting, locally-originated educational programs, and seeking out that knowledge from a widening array of allied institutions is just now on the "cusp." We need to support that fragile trend, in part as a fundamental form of collaboration itself.

Meanwhile, listening to committed, broadly experienced colleagues during April's panel meeting has convinced me of the critical importance of developing a research agenda for the study of informal, community-based adult learning in non-traditional institutions which is appropriate to each of those key characteristics. That is, both the goals and methods of developing research in this area must take into account the need to follow very different procedures and operating principles from those employed for more familiar forms of research into formal, sequenced education, provided for young people, in a graded and tested system, and based in schools and similarly structured institutions. Above all, the basic criteria for developing essential research questions and methods must be responsive to the local, and often autonomous, circumstances of community-based, informal adult learning programs of all sorts. For the U.S. Department of Education the required flexibility may well

entail diverging from well established patterns of research and project implementation to meet the needs of adult constituencies in the grass-roots, while finding ways to maintain high standards of research and using project results to empower "non-traditional" educational institutions, program developers, and their clients.

My final, and strongest, recommendation is that we build into the effort every possible assurance that we keep research development broad-ranging, interdisciplinary, and directed toward the philosophical, conceptual, and technical advancement of educational services to adults in our diverse public constituencies. The field of community-based life-long learning for adults is too new and too diverse to be prematurely strictured by overly rigid assumptions about what forms of study will or will not ultimately benefit the public. As the panel suggests, and the many and varied examples of research referred to during April's proceedings confirms, educational practitioners, scholars, and community representatives are all engaged in new, useful, and sometimes only partly matured forms of educational research. It is much too soon in this composite enterprise to exclude from consideration the contributions of any approach or discipline.

Selected Readings

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Visitor Surveys: A User's Manual (American Association of Museum, 1990)

Visitor Studies: Theory, Research and Practice, ed. S. Bitgood et al, collected research, continuing series (Center for Social Design, 1988-)

What Research Says About Learning in Science Museums, collected essays (Association of Science-Technology Centers, 1990).

Williams, L. V., "Apples, Oranges, and Sometimes Unicorns,: Appreciating the Differences between Individual Learners," unpublished essay presented at "Science Learning in the Informal Setting, The Chicago Academy of Sciences, 1989.

Professional Resource Centers & Organizations

Center for Museum Studies (until recently: Office of Museum Programs), Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Director: Rex Ellis, 202-357-3102.

Office of Institutional Studies, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Director: Zahava Doering, 202-357-1300.

Education Committee, American Association of Museums. Chair: Mary Ellen Munley, Empire State Museum, Albany, NY, 518-474-1569. (See also the Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation.)

Museum Education Roundtable, Washington, DC. Chair: A. T. Stephens, 202-232-6084.

Visitor Studies Association. Contact: Stephen Bitgood, Center for Social Design, Jacksonville, Al, 205-782-5640.

The major established graduate programs in Museum Education and Museum Studies provide a varied array of courses, seminars, and resource materials pertaining to public service and related research in the field:

Museum Education Program, The George Washington University, Washington, DC. Director: Carol Stapp, 202-994-6820.

Museum Education Programs, Bank Street College of Education, New York City. Contact: Nina Jensen, 212-875-4491.

In addition, a number of major museums provide educational resource centers, primarily designed for assisting teachers but useful to others, and/or significant professional libraries, which may be available to educational researchers. See, for example, the Resource Center at the Kraft Education Center, Art Institute of Chicago.

Paper A

COMMUNITY BASED ADULT JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Paul A. Flexner
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paper presented to the

Public Libraries and Community-Based Education:
Making the Connection for Lifelong Learning

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Adult learning in the Jewish community finds its roots in the biblical and early post-biblical periods of its history. Beginning with the introduction of the Torah or biblical reading by Ezra in the fourth century before the common era (BCE), the Jewish people have long valued the written word as a guide to living. With the destruction of the Temple in the first century of the common era, the role of study gained in importance as the sacrificial cult was formally replaced by a system of worship built upon the concepts of praise, action and learning (Enelow, 1927, p. 6). As a result, learning and the pursuit of knowledge through the exploration of the words of the Torah was understood as the foundation of an ethical and religious life (Drazin, 1940, p. 12).

As the Rabbinic period of Judaism took hold at the beginning of the common era, the adult Jew understood that the study of Torah, in both its narrow and broad sense, was a daily obligation. Through this study, the Jew was able to apply the wisdom of the tradition to daily living. The importance of this obligation can readily be seen by the extensive detail provided in the rabbinic literature regarding how and when study should take place. Those who followed the requirements fulfilled the purpose of the learning experience by deepening their connection to the community while developing a deeper sense of themselves as individuals.

The focus among these early leaders was on the adult population where systems for learning and study were established as a function of the daily activities within the community. The worship experience which took place three times a day became the primary activity for reflection and study based on a variety of text materials from different historical periods. As the depth of the material became more complex and the people no longer understood the language in which much of the material was written, the leaders developed new methods for imparting the wisdom of the sages to the masses including the use of explanatory remarks

and sermons.

This system of educating the Jewish people continued until the advent of the modern period in the 18th and 19th centuries. As the barriers to participation in the larger community disappeared, small groups initiated new approaches to learning called study circles. These provided opportunities to fulfill the religious obligation while becoming participants in the drama of the Jewish people and members of a fellowship or community of Jews (Heilman, 1983, p. 239). Many of these study circles are organized within the orthodox community and serve as the primary program of adult learning for their members.

Throughout this early development of learning, little attention was given to the education of children who learned the traditions, customs and history through active involvement in the family and neighborhood. However, as the transition from the medieval society to the modern or industrial age took place, new forms of educating the masses were developed for both adults and children. Of particular note was the expansion of formal schooling for children and the decline of active Jewish learning among the adult population, especially for the adults in the less observant, non-orthodox segments of the community.

By the latter part of the 20th century, the shift from adult learning to the education of the children was nearly complete within the liberal (non-orthodox) segments of the community. Although adult education programs are regularly sponsored by synagogues and community organizations, the level of intensity in no way matches the level of learning that the contemporary Jew has achieved in the general arts and sciences, and within the various professional fields that make up their career choices. For many, the wide gap between general knowledge and understanding of Judaica creates a tension which interferes with the willingness to explore their Jewish roots. As a result, participation in serious adult Jewish learning programs dropped to its lowest levels by the mid 1980's when several new initiatives

were introduced to bring the adults back into a learning frame.

ADULT LEARNING IN THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Learning within the religious tradition encompasses a level of thought and activity which goes far beyond the typical adult education format which generally focuses on the acquisition of information and skills. For the religious community, the purpose of the experience is focused on the development of meaning structures which aid individuals in relating their own personal experiences to the larger purposes of living within a community of people. This is generally grounded on a particular set of traditions which emanate out of the religious heritage of the group. For McKenzie, "religious education must be action oriented" so that learners are "prepared to change the world under the guidance of their religious convictions" (1986, p. 13).

A second approach to religious learning suggests that adults are best able to find meaning in their lives by relating their own personal stories to the stories of the religious community. The meaning of life and death, of faith and commitment are enhanced through the stories which relate the rituals, values and beliefs of the faith community to the spirit of a supreme being. By establishing a personal connection between the religious traditions and the general culture, the individual will discover a deeper meaning and become more committed to the practices and observances of the community (Vogel, 1991, p. 69).

From these two perspectives, we begin to understand the different nature of adult religious education. On the one hand, religious education encourages the learner to explore and question beliefs and opinions in light of the past and present in order to gain a deeper understanding of self in relationship to the community. On the other hand, the intellectual exercises should lead the individual to develop an approach to life which provides guidance

in daily behaviors and interactions with others. Within the Jewish tradition, the learning is grounded on a system of actions that focus on the relation that the individual has with others and with God. The joining of these two purposes is intended to help the learner find a deeper meaning and purpose to life.

THE PROGRAMS AND THEIR SPONSORS

Since the vast majority of adult Jewish learning opportunities are sponsored by community based, non-academic institutions and organizations (e.g. synagogues, community centers and membership organizations), categorizing the nature of the programs is rather complicated. There are formal courses that meet weekly as well as lecture series' on particular themes that meet for a set number of sessions. Other formats include evening or Sunday morning lectures and scholar-in-residence weekends, as well as informal study groups. Many organizations also provide brief learning opportunities at the beginning of meetings and provide training for leaders as part of their regular on-going operations.

For the traditional, orthodox community, learning (especially for the men) is considered a daily obligation and takes place either in the synagogue or in small study groups at a variety of locations. Many follow the traditional model of studying or learning a page of the Talmud each day either as individuals or with a set group of peers.

As women have gained greater independence both as learners and in their personal lives, they have pursued a variety of intellectual activities including formal study programs designed by and for women. Among these are several adult institutes which offer courses on both practical and theoretical subjects all of which are grounded in traditional Jewish text materials and are primarily organized in the orthodox community. For those who are seeking a community of women who share common interests, weekly and monthly sessions are

organized to explore issues of mutual concern and study traditional texts. A third model which began primarily as a women's study program within the synagogue but now includes a few men is the Adult Bat Mitzvah (women) or Bar Mitzvah (men) program. The study program lasts either one or two years and often has a dramatic impact on the individual's lifestyle and involvement in the congregation and community.

It should be obvious that programs that take so many different forms are sponsored by agencies and organizations which have different goals and organizing principles. The single largest category of sponsorship is the synagogue. With over three thousand separate and independent institutions in the United States, the synagogues reach the largest number of Jewish people. The purposes of each synagogue are quite similar even though they often do not agree on how to achieve their purpose. In the area of adult learning, the synagogue considers itself ideally positioned to provide for the needs of its members. Consequently, each synagogue sponsors programs following one or more of the models mentioned above. They continually reach out to their members as the primary audience with the goal of increasing their knowledge, understanding and commitment to the values and ideals of Judaism as interpreted by the leaders, both lay and professional, of that particular synagogue.

In many communities, several synagogues join together for special adult learning programs in addition to their own in-house offerings. These community based activities also follow a variety of formats, but the tendency is to provide a series of visiting lectures and/or classes that are open to the members of the sponsoring congregations. The classes are generally taught by the professional leaders, i.e., rabbis, cantors and educators of the congregations with the members being encouraged to enroll in the class that most interests them. These programs usually draw significant participation but are not designed to replace

the regular and normal program offerings of the individual synagogues. Although the primary sponsors of these programs are the synagogues, other community organizations often join as co-sponsors. These include the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation or community welfare fund.

One of the defining characteristics of the Jewish community has been its willingness to provide assistance to other Jewish people when they arrive in the country as new immigrants, particularly when their immigration is the result of a major upheaval in their homeland. During the last twenty-five years, there has been a major influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union who have required a wide variety of services including assistance in becoming Americans. As a Jewish community, this group of immigrants poses a new set of challenges in that they are arriving as Jews but with little understanding of what that means. Therefore, the enculturation process is being conducted on two levels which involves a high level of interactivity with both the social service and continuing education programs in the local community.

In addition to these primary program sponsors, there are a wide variety of independent organizations that sponsor programs of adult learning for their members. Most are membership groups which have a particular political or philosophical position which attracts members. Many have zionist or pro-Israel concerns and, therefore, design programs to promote the special relation that American Jews have with Israel. Others are designed to provide people with opportunities to meet other Jews for both social and intellectual activities, without a particular religious or political orientation. In each of these organizations, adult learning is viewed as a major activity designed to promote the vision and ideology of the group and for maintaining membership.

The funding of most of these programs is much less complex. The faculty are

generally the professionals from the organizations, and are expected to teach as part of their contractual arrangements. In order to cover the minor expenses for publicity and refreshments, either a small fee is charged or an allocation is provided by the organization. When a guest speaker is invited, the organization either subvents the cost from the budget or the funds are provided by a donor through an endowment for an annual program. In some organizations, world renowned speakers are invited in order to attract large numbers of people from the community who pay a fee to attend. Since the organizations have yet to distinguish the course from a lecture as a distinct form of educational experience, these programs are grouped together in this presentation just as they are within the organization's committee structure.

In the last decade, three new initiatives have been widely adopted by various leadership groups. The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School is a two year intensive learning program to introduce members of the community to the basic concepts and values of Judaism. Under the auspices of a community organization, the program meets thirty times per year in a highly structured format. The Wexner Heritage program is a nationally funded initiative for young community leaders who demonstrate a strong personal commitment and wish to combine a deeper understanding of Judaism with their roles as leaders. The third is a national organization, the National Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL) which offers short and long courses to various community organizations in order to better prepare their leadership to fulfill the role of being Jewish leaders.

DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH

There are very few sources of information about the adult learning opportunities within the Jewish community. Most organizations keep few documents which detail their activities in

adult education other than publicity notices and occasional committee minutes. Because of the structure and organization of the programs, instructors are not encouraged to prepare formal course outlines nor are there attempts to evaluate the quality of the experience as a learning activity. Learners are invited to attend and stay as long as they wish, without assignments or a concern as to whether they have learned or grown as a result of their participation.

A few research projects have been conducted over the past forty years which have attempted to analyze the state of adult Jewish learning. These generally take the form of doctoral dissertations which explain the results of the research (Cohen, 1967; Israeli, 1974; Rose, 1974; Epstein, 1980). In a few cases, a national organization has prepared a report on the state of the field in order to guide its work (Union of American Hebrew Ccongregations and the Jewish Education Service of North America). Also, scholarly articles have been published by researchers with a particular interest in the field (Fishman, 1987; Katz, 1990; Lipstadt, 1988; Zachary, 1991). But this research is highly limited and provides little cohesive information about the experience and impact of adult Jewish learning.

ADULT JEWISH LEARNING AND THE LIBRARY SYSTEM

Jews have long been active supporters of a system of sharing books within the community. This dates back to the days when commentaries and analytical materials were first written down. With the advent of the printing press, communal repositories of books were kept and made available to interested parties. This may be the first example of an organized library system which was developed by and for a particular group of people.

In twentieth century America, with the development of an extensive system of public libraries in communities large and small throughout the country, the Jewish people became

active users and supporters of their local library. They turned to the library for reading materials which helped them in becoming integrated into the American community. They used the library as the source of materials in the English language so that they could improve their ability to communicate in their new country. But, while they were taking full advantage of the available public system for their needs as new Americans, they were also developing their own private system of libraries with Judaic materials which they did not expect the public system to include in the collection. Thus, as we prepare for the new millennium, extensive collections of Judaic materials are housed in libraries which are sponsored by and located within the institutions created by the Jewish community.

This dual system of libraries provides two distinct sources of information for the members of the community. On the one hand, they turn to the public library for information which helps them in their interactions with the society at large. They are avid readers of materials in all fields of learning. On the other hand, they do not expect the public library to be the repository of research materials and information about the Jewish people and, therefore, turn to their own system within the institutions of their community for information about Jewish issues. There are, of course, areas where the public and Jewish libraries overlap but these tend to be in the more popular or general areas of Jewish scholarship and literary writing.

Within the Jewish community, there are three types of organizations which have libraries - academic institutions, community based organizations and synagogues. The academic institutions house the largest and most comprehensive collections. They are generally located in the institutions of higher Jewish learning, such as seminaries and community sponsored colleges. There are also exceptional collections of Judaica at universities and colleges which have major programs in Jewish studies. Many Jewish

communities have also chosen to develop libraries which primarily serve the needs of the Jewish population but are open to anyone in the community. These collections are often limited by donations, either financial or in the form of books from personal libraries. In some cities where there is no university or institution of higher Jewish learning with an extensive collection, these community sponsored libraries have developed collections of several hundred thousand volumes and include many valuable research items. Finally, almost every synagogue has established a library to serve its membership. These collections are generally of a more popular nature with little attempt to provide for serious scholarly works other than those which have been donated.

Since there is such an extensive set of libraries in Jewish institutions, the public libraries in most communities have not found it necessary to serve this function. However, in most libraries there are small sections of books on Jewish topics. These collections provide for the needs of both the Jewish members of the community as well as the general population. No attempt is made to provide for those who are conducting serious research, but materials are available for students and community members who are seeking to learn about Judaism and the Jewish people.

PROPOSAL FOR AN ADULT JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM

The Jewish community in the United States has long been recognized as one of the most literate and highly educated groups within the total population. As individuals, they have prided themselves on their high achievements in academic circles and have gained respect from most Americans for their contributions to the cultural, intellectual and political life of the country. This success in becoming highly integrated into the general society has had a major impact on their level of involvement in Judaism and their understanding and knowledge

of the values, history and ideas of the three thousand year tradition of the Jewish people. For the vast majority of American Jews, in particular those who are not actively involved in the orthodox community, participation in either formal or informal Jewish learning activities has become a rare experience and holds little interest for them. In fact, only about 15 percent of American Jewish adults engage in Jewish learning in any given year (Kosmin, et.al., 1991).

For the leadership in the community, many of whom are active learners within their organization, the need to attract more people to engage in the study of Judaism has long been a major goal. They believe that the learning process is what encourages people to develop a stronger identity and relationship with their community and to become more actively involved in it. And yet, the demands within each individual organization limits its ability to provide the type of educational program which will attract large numbers of the membership. For those who do attend, the motivations vary from an interest in learning from the particular instructor as a result of a personal relationship with him or her, to the desire to be with other people who share a common set of values and interests. In this regard, they are not unlike adults from any ethnic or religious group.

In order to provide a substantive adult learning program for the members of the Jewish community, a new and innovative format should be constructed which will take advantage of the wealth of resources that exist within the community while not putting undue pressures on the existing infra-structure. Each of the organizations, whether it be a synagogue, community center or independent group has an established agenda and a desire to promote that agenda with its membership. Part of this agenda includes furthering the Jewish understanding and knowledge of the members. In this area, there is tremendous overlap and commonality, although for some the differences in interpretation often interferes

with the implementation of the common agenda.

To address this concern, we propose that a community-wide taskforce be established with lay and professional representation from each of the organizations to be charged with the development of a community based adult Jewish learning program. With the diverse nature of the people within the community, the taskforce should seek to develop a program of learning opportunities that reaches the widest possible cross-section of the population. To accomplish this objective, the nature and format of the activities, as well as their actual locations within the community, should be designed to meet the needs of the various small groups of members whose interests might be piqued by the particular offerings. The challenge of creating such a program which brings the various groups together to plan and develop a joint program must be assumed by a community which touches everyone. For most of the cities in the United States, this group is known as the Jewish Federation, or the community planning and fundraising body, and is often represented by an agency or committee whose sole function is the furtherance of the Jewish education activities for the community. With the sponsorship of the Federation (either directly or through the education agency) and the financial support that it can provide to the project, the individual organizations should be willing to cooperate in improving the quality of the adult learning program.

THE ROLE OF THE TASKFORCE

For a group that is as diverse as the Jewish community, the challenge of bringing together a consortium of people who represent each of the disparate organizations is the first major task. To accomplish this, the community-wide organization should establish a small working group to begin the exploration of the idea with the leaders of each independent

organization. However, before this working group begins to discuss the concept with outside leaders, they will need to begin the process of learning about adult learning in general, and adult Jewish learning in particular. They will need to become well versed in the philosophical and practical underpinnings of the field in order to develop an appropriate outreach program which will draw the partners into the process.

Once the working group understands their task and is familiar with the field of adult learning, they should begin to meet with the lay and professional leadership in each of the organizations to discuss the concept of a joint venture. Based on a solid foundation of research gathered from academic sources, the proposed model of adult learning will serve as a motivation for the leaders to enter into the process even if they are not ready to commit their organization to full participation. A major component of the initial conversation should be an outline of the work of the Taskforce which will be responsible for developing the implementation plan after an extensive process of learning and data gathering. It should be made clear from the outset that the Taskforce does not plan to move ahead without a process which will explore the needs of all participants and which will be sensitive to the particular concerns of each organization.

The creation of the Taskforce will initiate a learning curve for the members which will lead to their becoming the experts in the field of adult Jewish learning. Their first task will be to learn about the fields of adult learning and adult Jewish learning. To be effective planners of a community program, the Taskforce will need to establish a clear vision for adult learning which indicates to the institutions and the learners what the purposes of the learning experiences will be. By engaging in a dialogue with each other and with professionals in the two fields (adult learning and adult Jewish or religious learning), the Taskforce members will be able to articulate their purpose in clear language that can be distributed to the leadership

of each organization. This statement will set the framework for the process of the Taskforce as it enhances the adult learning opportunities for the residents of the community.

THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

At the heart of the Taskforce's work will be an extensive data gathering effort. By approaching their work as a research project, they will be able to focus their attention on the information which will inform the decision making that will follow. They will need to collect information about the adult learning programs that are currently sponsored by the individual organizations in the community, such as, where programs are offered, when they meet, who teaches the classes, who attends, how much they cost, and where the funds come from. This inventory will provide the committee with a foundation of information which will guide their work.

A community based Taskforce is also in a position to explore successful models of adult learning in other communities. There are three specific venues to consider. First, the Jewish community, both locally and across the nation, will provide examples of creative adult Jewish learning activities. Second, other religious and ethnic groups have demonstrated success which will provide models which can be emulated or adapted to the needs of the community. And, finally, the field of general adult education offers a wealth of initiatives which have achieved widespread success From each of these venues, models of programming should be examined to learn about the factors which contributed to their success and/or failure. By learning about the work of others, the Taskforce will be able to develop an exciting selection of programmatic initiatives which will attract the largest possible audience from the community.

Despite the knowledge garnered from other sources, there are clear indications that

the faculty are the single most significant group contributing to the success of the program. Their abilities as lecturers and facilitators of learning will either attract or discourage the average adult learner. Most already serve in full-time positions within their organization and are known to a significant number of individuals. Their reputations have been established based upon their current set of skills. Some have proven track records and are considered excellent instructors while others are weak and have deficiencies. The Taskforce, through its process of exploring the field of adult learning, will be prepared to recommend and sponsor training programs for the faculty so that their skills as facilitators will be improved. The results will be beneficial to the program and to the organizations which employ the faculty members. Thus, the professional development component of the Taskforce's work will impact on the community in multiple ways.

To accomplish this agenda, the Taskforce will need to establish a close working relationship with each of the organizations. In light of the differences in approach that many of the groups have in their interpretation of Judaism, a high level of sensitivity will be necessary if a cooperative spirit is to carry the project forward. This may mean that the same course will be taught in several locations by different faculty who represent the different perspectives. Attention will also need to be given to the current thinking among many leaders that the role of the institution or organization is to provide for the needs of its membership. By establishing a community based adult learning program, the institutions will need to understand that a more Jewishly literate population will lead to a higher level of affiliation and that providing access to those who are not yet members should not have a negative impact on their organizations.

An effective marketing strategy is a key element to the overall success of the venture. At every stage in the program's development, Taskforce members will need to promote their

vision and the accompanying product to the appropriate constituencies. They will need to be responsive to the particular needs of both the institutions and the individuals so that all will believe that they are being included in the process.

The last key element in the process is to assure that every program meets the highest standards of excellence. The Taskforce is responsible for quality control which necessitates that criteria be established which can be easily observed. In the area of adult Jewish or religious education, determining whether a program is successful and achieves its goals is highly problematic. Careful consideration needs to be given to the different types of goals and objectives for a religious education program as compared to other types of learning experiences. For example, is the goal to expand the level of knowledge or is it to impact on behavioral patterns? Should the program be concerned with whether the learner increases his or her active involvement in religious practices or only to be conversant with the reasons for the practices? Since the answers to these questions are often ambiguous, recognition needs to be given to the wide variations among the various program sponsors as well as for the learners. For the program to be effective and meaningful for the sponsors, institutions, faculty and learners, clear guidelines should be agreed upon by all participants. By agreeing on a set of criteria in the early stages of the planning process, evaluating the impact of the programs will become a part of the formal activities of the Taskforce and will result in a higher level of adult learning in the community.

Thus, the implementation strategy involves the establishment of a Taskforce which represents both lay and professional leadership from the community. This group of leaders will coalesce around a common agenda as they develop a vision for the learning program and establish appropriate guidelines for its introduction to the community. Their knowledge of the field of adult learning will be reflected in their concern for delivering a quality product

which includes the provision for improving the existing structure and personnel.

THE ROLE OF A FEDERAL RESEARCH AGENCY

The United States has a long tradition built on the concept of the separation of church and state. The teaching and practice of religion is an area in which the government does not interfere. There should be no activities which involve governmental action to promote one religious group over another. The specific interpretation of this policy has been established by the legislative and judicial branches of our government. However, this should not and does not preclude a government agency from engaging in research which will benefit many groups within the society including the vast array of religious organizations.

From this perspective, it is appropriate to suggest types of general research that arise out of the particular needs of the Jewish community which might assist many different groups who are engaged in similar adult learning ventures. Several specific areas arise out of this presentation. First, the model suggested includes a significant learning program on the concepts and practices of adult learning for those involved in the planning of programs. There is currently little guidance for planning and developing continuing education programs within the volunteer sector. Most of these activities are generated by people who contribute their time in support of the organization. While they may bring to the group an expertise in a related area, it is rare for someone to have a background in program planning in the field of adult learning. One major contribution would be for the research agency to examine the field to determine the nature and type of materials that would be most helpful in preparing the volunteers for their role.

Second, most instructors in the adult Jewish learning field do not consider this activity to be their primary role. Rather, they generally serve as a religious leader of the community

or as an educator for the children of the congregation. They have little if any training in the facilitation of learning for adults. Also, even though they have committed their lives to the Jewish community, their background in how to facilitate the religious development of their congregants is almost non-existent. When the instructors become involved in teaching adults, the tendency is to teach like they were taught without a clear understanding of the principles or practices of adult learning. The research agency could make a major contribution to the field by exploring the methods and techniques for preparing the instructors for their role as facilitators of learning. What is known about the preparation of adult learning instructors? What types of programs would be successful? Is it possible to bring together instructors from widely divergent fields for training purposes? How do the techniques of facilitation differ when the nature of the content changes from a practical skill to the inculcation of a value system? Finally, is there a distinction between the methodology for facilitating learning for adults in a religious education program and for those who are learning the value system of the American people, i.e., for new immigrants?

A third area where a federal research agency could make a major contribution would be to explore the motivating factors which drive individuals to enroll in different types of adult learning programs. Is the profile different for an adult who enrolls in a computer class as compared to the one who chooses to study religion? What is known about why people enroll in adult learning activities? How can this information assist the program planners involved in different types of adult learning institutions?

Without infringing on the issues of religion directly, the federal research agency might provide valuable information to those individuals and groups who are actively involved in creating learning opportunities for their memberships. The specific areas of program planning, professional development and learner motivation would be useful to all involved in

the field of adult learning. To provide information which differs from that designed for highly structured organizations such as community colleges or community based adult learning centers where specialists are engaged as program developers, would be most useful and provide a service that scholars and the trained practitioners would not address in their research and writing.

CONCLUSION

Religious learning for adults provides many challenges for the field of adult education. A high percentage of the courses offered are provided within religious institutions under the guidance of a volunteer committee and professional staff who have not received training in the field. As educated individuals, they have all participated in both formal and informal educational programs since their youth. The approach they take to the field is based upon their personal experience as learners at an earlier stage of their life. As a result, the type of courses and the methodology utilized is predicated on a system of learning that is more suitable to a different population.

In the area of adult religious learning, the problems are compounded by the dramatic difference in the purpose of the endeavor. Rather than teaching for knowledge and information purposes which is typical of most adult learning programs, religious education is value centered with the explicit goal of helping people live more meaningful lives. This distinction is rarely understood by those who are involved in planning or delivering the educational program in the Jewish community. Typically, both the programmer and the instructor rely on personal experience as the guide to proper performance instead of a formal system of training which would prepare them to facilitate the learning process in the most effective and meaningful manner.

The U. S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement could provide an excellent service by addressing the needs of that segment of the population who are primarily interested in the development of a values education program for lifelong learners. Specifically, research should be commissioned which will provide guidance to those involved on the local and institutional level who are responsible for both program development and the facilitation of the learning process. By providing funding to researchers who are interested and prepared to devote serious energy to understanding the process of transmitting values to an adult population, the Department would be making an outstanding contribution to the field.

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ON LEARNING TO (UN)LEARN FOR A BETTER LIFE:
Some Cursory Library Literacy Remarks

by

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for

Public Libraries and Community-Based Education:
Making the Connection for Lifelong Learning

A conference sponsored by the
National Institute on Post-secondary Education,
Libraries and Lifelong Learning
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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Washington, D.C.

"It took almost my entire life for me to realize that I had learned things that should not have been learned at all because those very things kept me down in life. For instance, in the course of my first three decades, I was led to believe that I was not smart enough and that most certainly I would not amount to anything of much value in life. For one thing, I was just a woman; for another, I was no more than a peasant. Deliberately or not, I was taught by my own family, church, school and society that I was going to be a failure in life. Unknowingly to ensure the validity of such a prophecy, I learned to believe what I had been taught. Victim of such a learning, I became a failure in many projects and initiatives that I did or tried to do. Then, one day I started reflecting about those things and the more I reflected, the more some of them did not make much sense to me anymore. I had been taught to be my worse enemy and, being the good daughter, the good sister, the good woman, the good wife that I had been taught and learned to be, only then nearly forty years later it had become clear to me that I had to learn to unlearn a great deal of things that had cost me so much pain and so many years of discipline, energy, dedication and efforts to learn."

Olivia Flores-Godinez, a single mother of five, doing popular education in Chicago's Humboldt Park area through Universidad Popular, a community-based organization. April 05, 1995.

ON LEARNING TO (UN)LEARN FOR A BETTER LIFE

By Elio DeArrudah

Looking Back

There was a time in the history of this society when post-secondary education was a privilege that only a rather small fraction of its population could afford. For the most part, education was a concept interchangeable with the acquisition of reading skills. Given the simplicity of those days' society, one did not need more than very few years of schooling to master whatever academic, technical, career or vocational skills the existing jobs were requiring from its citizenry. Furthermore, Native Americans, Blacks and other subgroups were not supposed to be introduced to the world of education or reading. Because neither bookstores nor libraries were widespread enough, the Bible and the farmers' almanacs were the two most sought and read publications. Understandably, a lot more people than now were living in rural areas in those days carrying out some sort of agricultural chores. Newspapers or magazines, if any, existed basically to disseminate news and information once or twice a week through their very few and spartan pages. More than merely "reading for pleasure", literate people did most of their readings for technical or trade purposes; other than that, it was to "save their souls" by reading the "Lord's words."

Being perceived as subhumans or not fully humans, members of such distinct subgroups in this society were not expected to master enough academic, vocational, technical or career education to save either this life by getting decent jobs or the next by reading the so-termed holy scriptures: All things considered, these subgroups' sole purpose in life was to serve the dominant segments of

society. This being the picture, really there was not a concerted effort to treat everybody in the same way. The letter of the covenants, constitutions or laws of the land only in theory applied to everybody; the "nobodies" of society were not necessarily locked out of the system, but their opportunities to succeed in life definitely were not as plenty as those for the "somebodies" of the occasion.

Even as late as the last century, a lot more people than today were living in rural areas carrying out agricultural activities of one kind or another through their large families. Incidentally, the institution of family was healthy enough back then to insure the survival and success of a lot more people than nowadays, when government, after breaking the family structure, has been playing a growing number of family roles. At the same time, the bulk of city dwellers were being absorbed by some combination of unskilled or low-skilled jobs. In such a scenario, not necessarily elementary but definitely secondary schooling tended to be a luxury to too many people. Paradoxically enough, as we moved from one war to the next (most especially the civil and the world ones), the pace of change increased almost overnight. Women, Blacks, Native Americans, Asians, Latins and other subgroups gradually sought to be treated as full human beings with full human rights. At the same time that many problems were solved through the mere recognition of such a reality, many other challenging situations automatically came to light. After all, the reservoir of resources was not as unlimited as it was once believed. Therefore, new mechanisms had to be developed to select who now was going to be the "full" human beings of the new society.

The assumption, at the time, was that only full humans could be fully functional in society and that only education could drill functionality into one's life. From such an understanding of education to the implementation of it, however, there was quite a way to go. In fact, only with the growing complexity in the

workplace and society, families started developing the idea of sending out their "prime members" for further training or continuing education. Because subgroups' raisons d'etre had been to serve the dominant segments of society more so than to serve themselves, their families usually were in no position to send their offsprings away for secondary or higher learning. Actually, whenever they went away was to fetch quick means to rescue the family from some sort of economic hardship caused by flood, drought, fire, arson, tornado or the like. A few more wars (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, etc.) came along exacerbating the pace of change in society and, consequently, forcing even grown-ups to educate themselves to cope with the many changes. Because typically the people who were drafted to go to the battlefields were not rich, they tended to lack the ability to pay for their own training and education. This phenomenon in itself forced society, once those wars were over and the veterans were back home, to come up with a series of instruments such as student loans, scholarships, financial aids, fellowships, etc., etc. plus a wide range of programs to accommodate those whose deficits in education and income seemingly had been hindering their ability to function smoothly in society. As a symbol of the nation's gratitude toward the many thousands of Bill Reads who had been brave enough to tramp across Normandy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt hailed Public Law 346 or the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 which became known as the GI Bill. Essentially this Act made possible for a lot low-income citizens to have access to college education and home ownership. As a consequence of it, the nation's poor learned to look forward to wars as their best hopes to eventually "make it" in this society, ironically enough.

While education in the turn of the century meant mostly elementary education, by WWII it began to mean secondary education. As time went by, " to get my G.E.D." gradually became the personal goal of very many people.

However, by the time that the Vietnam War rolled into the picture, post-secondary education was what necessary for one to become functional in society without having to die for it in some far away places. To accommodate the aspirations of an increasing set of families and individuals with higher income, post-secondary education programs and institutions such as community colleges started to appear all over the country. While the better-off families would send their "children" out of town or state to a "real college experience" or university, others would settle for local community college classes and programs. In an effort to balance off or equalize this structural problem in this society, plenty of governmental programs were established to assist those that could not get any help from their own families. By the mid- 1960s, interestingly enough, college admission had become one of the several ways used by the better-off families to stir their children away from the war fronts in Southeast Asia. Those unable to break into post-secondary education circles had not much choice but to go to defend US interests overseas. Only upon their returns, they could -- if they still had kept enough of their hearts, limbs and minds together -- start thinking of going for further education.

With the transfer of technological knowledge from weaponry to plowshares, agriculture became agribusiness and continuing waves of people kept on moving to the cities. Without the benefit of elementary (WWI), secondary (WWII) or post-secondary (Korea, Vietnam) education, however, too many of them could not go anywhere in their post-elementary or secondary education pursuits. It was then that a plethora of adult basic education, with strong literacy blending, began to appear. Congress passed adult education legislation and, shortly after, the Laubachs started bringing home some of their church-based international literacy experiences. Before long, Laubach Literacy Action, Inc. (LLA), became the nation's largest network of literacy providers followed very closely by Literacy Volunteers of

America, Inc. (LVA). Both these trend-setting networks, however, started off their literacy efforts in this country overwhelmingly with volunteers whereas much of the adult literacy education dollars were being earmarked for school districts and community colleges. Not being able to access the bulk of the adult education dollars, public libraries tended to limit themselves to the provision of space, collections and, more recently, computers. Lacking the ability to hire the necessary "professional" staff, LLA and LVA designed extensive training programs to prepare the literacy practitioners of their affiliates, usually community-based organizations or CBOs. On the other hand, local educational agencies (LEAs) such as public schools and community colleges have consistency resorted to professional staffers (meaning: people with college degrees) to carry out their adult continuing education duties; in general, staff development here has left a lot to be desired. While literacy staff with college training seem comfortable enough with however much they have already learned in college, the opposite seem to happen with undergrade staff who, for one reason or another, are constantly seeking to take workshops, seminars and the like to compensate for their lack of enough formal training. Consequently, they become the embodiment of lifelong learning more so than the "professional" types who already know all that one needs to know to perform well. To many of these, they got their "education" in college, graduate school and the like. Not surprisingly, they have stopped doing enough learning to be of much help to themselves or anybody. Evidently, they have not yet learned that education is a lifelong process.

The Problem With These Programs

Just like education has meant different things in different stages of the

national development, literacy has also gone through a wide range of phases and thus definitions. More to the point, perhaps, even today one can find in any single region of the country various interpretations for the very concept of literacy. Once it used to be the mere ability to decipher written information; as a matter of fact, this still is the case in many societies around the world. In those milieux, a literate person is anybody who can sign his or her own name and decode information written with low degrees of complexity. The less "primitive" is the environment or society, the more complex tends to be the general understanding of what literacy is . For instance, many grassroots groups in Chicago approach literacy as the ability to read the surrounding world while most literacy volunteer organizations take literacy skills as being something interchangeable merely with word-reading skills. Because there is a difference between reading the word (the Bible, in many circles) and reading the world (job applications, leases, prescriptions, bills, abuses, discriminations, etc.), with all its complexities, turmoils and challenges, it is quite understandable the diversity of the above-indicated concepts or definitions.

In Chicago's South and West Sides, one finds literacy providers, especially CBOs, wanting to prepare people to change their neighborhoods, if not society in general. Most of the literacy providers elsewhere in the city, however, simply try to have their students to change themselves, which incidentally is the position advocated by most donors and funders of literacy programs. Their curricula, materials and methods of instruction tend to be very behaviorist, mechanical or technical. Nonetheless, the average citizen lacking literacy skills in most inner city neighborhoods in Chicago usually sees a more pronounced need for changes in society as a whole than in themselves. Consequently, they tend to distance themselves from these sorts of adult continuing education programs. People that

are bitter at the larger society for one reason or another usually do well in programs harboring similar views on social, cultural, economic and political deficits; they certainly would not want to be part of programs that hold views, values and philosophies too different from theirs.

One of the major problems with publicly-funded programs is their philosophical assumptions. After all, implicitly they tend to hold the individual as the person with all the deficits and, therefore, solely responsible for his or her failures or dysfunctionalities in society. As a result, their high attrition rates should constitute no surprise whatsoever to anybody who has been keeping tab on these issues. Church-based programs, like most literacy volunteer operations, ordinarily end up with those participants who have chosen to see themselves as needing to undergo some or a lot of changes to fit in society, before and after the Messiah's second coming. In between these two extremes -- the need to change society vis-a-vis the need to change the individual -- there are many other educational programs conceptualizing and implementing their views and philosophies of lifelong learning. Their managers do not worry necessarily about being accountable to Caesar or God; instead, they tend to compromise somewhere between the need for personal and social change in order to be accountable to the learners. As it could not be otherwise, their staffers, methods, materials and curricula ordinarily reflect these values, views and praxes.

While church-based educators and education respond to their perceptions or understandings of God's will, Government-funded programs on the other hand are commissioned to carry out the values and views of the State. The major difference between both brands of education programming is the fact that, whereas centering on individual changes, one not only acknowledges societal problems but also a purpose for them while the other simply refuses to admit that there is much wrong

with today's society's economic and political constructs. Therefore, it is up to the individual to change himself or herself to fit in a society defined by "the few" for the many; overall, they suggest, society is pretty much okay as it is. Whether these issues are explicit or not, the reality is that they are reflected not only in the whats but also in the hows of our educational projects, programs and activities. The problem, nonetheless, for these educational designers comes from the fact that too many people in our neighborhoods simply refuse to buy those top-down bodies of opinions, prejudices or, as we put it, knowledge about what is wrong and thus needed to change in society. Both Church-oriented and State-based types of education are excellent to those who are not in conflict with the philosophical underpinnings of those two institutions. A significant number of people throughout our communities, however, would rather have a far different approach: They yearn for projects and programs with which they can have a real relationship. Whatever is removed from their neighborhoods tends to be treated as abstractions which they choose not to grasp or with which to have much of a relationship. This is precisely why it is not easy in these circumstances for many organizations, chiefly those with top-down worldviews, to do program recruitment and retention, even when participation is mandatory.

The more Church simulates the behavior of business enterprises and the more Government is perceived by the hoi polloi as representing the interests of the private sector and the higher castes of society, the more detached both these institutions become from the masses. Instead of helping people, there is the growing perception that these institutions seem to use people for their own causes. On the other hand, the segments of society with the ability to articulate their voices, to organize themselves (locally, regionally and nationally), to break into the printed and electronic media, to internet their voices, to e-mail their thoughts

elsewhere, to press institutions to be accountable to them do not necessarily need others to protect or assist them. After all, they pretty much can fend for themselves. But what about the others, that is, those who have "no manners", who do not know how to command attention, who are unable to use " proper English", who are too loud, too crazy and too lost to make enough sense out of their own reality? Can we as a society afford to continue dismissing them? No, definitely not! It would be societal suicide because too many people fall in those categories these days. Therefore, we can no longer shrug off "their" problems as though these problems were only theirs; whether we realize it or not, they are ours as well and we'd better do something about them.

It is out of this weltanschauung that one starts considering the need for bottom-up or community-based policies, programs and projects. Institutions that are not in tune with the spirit of the neighborhoods, regions or populations that they are supposed to be serving only by chance or accident can come up with programs and projects that make sense to the prospective or potential participant. One needs to be aware that a lot of the policies and programs that make a lot of sense to the bosses, managers, power holders, architects, leaders et al of our society do not necessarily make much or any sense to the general public. For this reason, the average citizen usually stays away from efforts and initiatives that are not designed from the community's standpoint. This explains in part why so many learning centers, community colleges and public schools show attendance problems of all kinds, not to mention attrition and desertion.

The more technology manufacturers succeed in tapping on public dollars, the more handle and control they get on the materials, methods of instruction and curricula of very many programs going all the way from pre-kindergarten (pre-K) to post-doctoral (post-D) education. Ordinarily, high-tech manufacturers and their

representatives learn enough about educational organizations, programs and projects in order to sell whatever products they happen to have in their accounts. This explains why these days a great deal of meeting time in educational institutions is spent reacting to technology-based propositions of one kind or another even when they are not clear enough on their own mission or purpose. Actually, if one is to draw from statements made by their administrators, one could easily start thinking that some of those so-called educational organizations' raisons d'etre was primarily to serve the business community. The more "pragmatical" we become, the more we as a society tend to trade education for something quick and of short-term return known in our circles as training. Education is not only useless but also expensive, we seem to be suggesting.

Training is what most storefront service providers want to sell to remedy us out of our troubles. For one thing, training is clear-cut, to-the-point, cost-effective, easy-to-implement type of operations, holler the apologists of both software and hardware manufacturers. The issue though, is that we can train a dog to retrieve the newspaper from the lawn but we can not educate it to read, or much less write, a newspaper for us. Likewise, in some ways we are left in the larger society with the impression that we are not willing to educate some of our peoples. The best that we can do for those ***have-nots,*** the impression goes, is to train them to retrieve the newspaper from the lawn for the ***haves***. The "untrainable" ones are left with no choice, it seems, but to be jailed up for a societal cost much higher than the tuition that we would pay for education in a decent college or university. In other words, seemingly education is not for everybody; the modern-day equivalent of subhumans are left, it appears, with some training opportunities. Increasingly, a rather smaller fraction of society is getting education which, of course, is expensive and, therefore, not available for everybody. Training-wise, the privileged

castes also get the best high-tech opportunities that money can buy; for them, considering their educational, cultural, economic, social and political background, training is definitely a major asset.

While the growing segments of low-income groups go after each other in urban America with passion, despair and vengeance, those better off move out to suburbia or exurbia: Not only they are physically mobile but also they do not necessarily need to ride or drive to the cities to carry out their daily missions. All in all, they can get on their cars and expressway themselves to their offices or simply telecommunicate their instructions, orders and the like without having to leave their own beds just like Nicholas William Leeson had been doing for so long until he imploded the other day the very bank that was managing England's Queen Elizabeth II's finances. The ***haves*** of this society have managed to empower themselves over public and private resources to such a degree that Government, like everything else, tends to work satisfactorily for them most of the time. Likewise, given their academic, class or cultural background, technology has proven to be excellent means toward their ends. On the other hand, what good does it do for those with no vehicles to have a great speedway available in the area? Not much, evidently. There is no question whatsoever that a highway, superhighway or the like are necessities for those with enough purchasing power to buy, lease or rent vehicles. Administrators of educational institutions, therefore, need to be constantly asking themselves about who their audiences, constituencies or publics are and, consequently, what roles are expected of them. Are they there (a) to respond to the needs of senior executives of high-tech firms, of banking, media, real estate outfits and the like, (b) to respond to the uneducated, underemployed, unemployed, homeless and so forth or (c) to respond to everybody? Who is the actual public of institutions, particularly those bankrolled

by tax-generated dollars? Should the ***haves*** deserve better accountability than the ***have-nots,*** especially from the so-called public servants? Evidently not, unless we are no longer serious about reaching out and retaining a more diverse population in our programs and projects.

Despite their rhetoric or mission statements, most of today's educational initiatives tend to help those that sooner or later would end up helping themselves in one or another way, with or without others' assistance. In fact, most of those interested or attracted to technology fall into such a category. In general, they are or once were skillful readers with enough self-esteem and confidence in themselves not to shy away from learning challenges. In short, they can take care of themselves as far as their learning needs go. Notwithstanding their lack of high school diploma or college degree, very many of them have managed to amass enormous amounts of technical knowledge on rather complex matters, ranging from hardware to software. Anyhow, it seems to me that we, especially those of us working in public institutions, should not worry so much about the provision of lifelong learning services to populations that show advanced degrees of high-tech literacies essentially because they have already mastered the basics of low-tech literacy skills. Given the scarcity of resources, priority must be given to those that are least equipped to succeed in today's society on their own. Shall the car be put in front of the horses and shall we be making computers with their expensive databases available to people who now are unable to read and understand books, magazines and newspapers or shall we go back to the basics first and have people to initiate themselves in the world of pencil, paper, pen, books and the like? We definitely must examine very closely what our priorities are or are going to be for the remaining years of this century, before we start talking about the 21st century.

The Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative

First, a few words about Chicago, a 2,750,000-plus inhabitants city. In the last two decades alone Chicago has lost about one-half million of people or an entire New Orleans or Denver to its suburbs or exurbs and other states. Its 600-plus public school facilities enroll over 410,000 students who have available to them a public library system with 80-plus neighborhood branches. Although its local community college has nine campuses spread throughout the city in addition to an even larger number of four-year colleges, post-secondary education is not necessarily as popular as one would expect in the inner city. Actually, more than a city, Chicago seems to be a cluster or confederation (Middle Age's style, I am afraid) of cities. Scaringly enough, the local county's jail with its 8,888-plus inmates is too small to accommodate all the many scores of troubled troublemakers that the police pick up in the streets every week.

Victim of segregation along lines such as income, ethnicity, race, language, geography, transportation, gangs and so on, each neighborhood resembles a borough or hamlet in itself. Although juxtaposed to one another, some of its neighborhoods are just as far apart as Seattle and Miami or New York and Los Angeles. Maybe we could afford these societal anomalies in bygone times of abundance but not anymore. From pre-K to post-D we must educate ourselves to do away not only with the physical distances that separate our denizens but also, most importantly, with the academic distances that have been hindering our ability to optimize the use of our limited resources. Without a much better utilization of the dwindling wherewithal that we have available, there is almost no chance that we can dream of a better world for everybody to live. On the other hand, it will be suicidal as a society to continue supporting only the efforts of a few groups in

our milieux while a growing majority out there cries in despair for help. For instance, according to the Illinois State Library, in the Chicagoland area alone there is no less than one million of adults unable to read and comprehend materials written with a degree of complexity at or higher than the ninth grade level. They are, in the Illinois jargon, labeled illiterate adults; they will easily drown, instead of surfing, in the information ocean of the 21st century. Can we afford to lock these 1,000,000-plus individuals out of the necessary basic academic skills to survive in the upcoming information society? Most likely, not! People endure hardships and behave according to the protocols, covenants or laws of the land as long as they can see some sort of long-term compensation for their (good) behavior. Without a sense of hope, they go berserk and then we as a society will have to either institutionalize them all or to literally do away with them just like so many other countries have tried to do in the world. These other countries, however, didn't necessarily proclaim to be as democratic or civilized as ours. Therefore, we must deal with this problem head on.

While gangs are now getting ahead of themselves and actively recruiting even elementary school kids to perform in distinct modalities of underground economies, not many Chicago high schools can retain and graduate even one out of every two of their freshman students. Unprepared to make their ends meet through some sort of career, trade or profession in the above-the-ground economy, those youngsters will be condemned to resort to some sort of underworld or underground economy before long. Skeptical and distrustful of the larger society, they do not have the discipline to wait for long-term rewards. Lacking a sense of tomorrow, they want to see the fruits of their efforts in the very same day that they start investing time and energy toward whatever they settle themselves up to do. They simply cannot wait a year or two to harvest a set of skills, diploma or

passport to a better life; having no faith whatsoever in our values systems, they are waiting no more. They are acting now with their muscles, baseball bats, knives and guns! Because they no longer believe in our tales of social justice, they can not see any wrong in their thinking or action. Sadly enough, a growing number of them perceive life as a nightmare, a torture or some sort of punishment already and they are not necessarily taking it anymore. To an extent, this mindset accounts for many of the repeated acts of violence that we have been hearing lately. Whereas many (upper)-middle-class judges and other gatekeepers of society still consider jail or prison terms as punishment, inner-city young adults see it differently; very many of them, as a matter of fact, feel much safer, better protected and better fed in jail than in their own homes or communities. With no sense of purpose, life becomes meaningless; this scenario makes drug abuse, alcoholism, burglary, suicide and homicide much easier to be understood, incidentally.

It was out of this picture that, almost in its own inception, the Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative was forced to re-invent itself in order to be of some appeal to underschooled Chicagoans. People with no sense of hope or tomorrow are dangerous to themselves and, consequently, to everybody else. Once despair strikes, these people will not want to buy education from us; education works for people with a strong sense of tomorrow and not for those fraught with hopelessness. Education sounds to them as something too abstract and, thus, too hard to which to relate; community residents want something more concrete, more tangible and real. Therefore, instead of merely buying the official discourse on literacy and approach it as word-reading-skills acquisition, the Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative decided to focus on world-reading-skills development as a strategy to reach out to the so-called hard-to-reach populations. Ultimately, it wanted to help its participants to understand the social constructs of their

communities. In the wake of such an understanding, people can define what changes they need to do (a) on themselves, (b) on their world and (c) on anything else that they deem necessary, whenever they judged appropriate. In line with this mindset, the Library decided to come up with learning centers where community residents would go for help on whatever issue with which they needed help. Instead of the very structured learning environment with a rather well-defined curriculum, as it is usually the case with LEAs, the literacy staff avail themselves to impart a wide range of basic academic skills. While some students come everyday, others come every now and then. While some bring traffic-related materials, others bring their bibles to be used as some sort of a primer. While some of them stick to the program for the entire year, others seem to be unable to stick with it or stay away for more than a month. Anyhow, the community residents are in charge of their learning experiences here; the literacy staff are merely incidental to the participants' learning which is definitely a lifelong process.

Since its beginnings in the mid-1980s, the Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative insisted that it does not do much **for** anybody. Rather, it chooses to do a lot of work **with** whoever comes to it. Should it have had unlimited resources, maybe it would be able to pursue a social work mindset and do things for its participants. In view of its tremendous limitations, however, it opted for a partnership of sorts with other providers of community services and, most importantly, with its students. Essentially, the Literacy Initiative functions as a broker of data, skills and information between unskilled and skilled persons, agencies and institutions. For the sake of outreaching, it depends upon not only the 80-plus branch libraries planted throughout the city but also upon a wide set of community organizations and agencies. While relying on these other providers of services to help its participants with skills and information on a broad range of

issues going from housing to health care, from children to senior citizens, from public aid to AIDS, from hunger to anger and so forth, the Literacy Initiative centers on world-reading skills development. Instead of pre-defined curricula as it usually occurs in most literacy programs, its texts, materials, methods and techniques are defined jointly by the groups' instructional leaders and participants.

Because the Literacy Initiative assumes that writing is just another facet, along with reading, of the basic academic skills kaleidoscope, the success of its participants tends to be measured by their ability to express themselves in writing and to "publish" their own works. Therefore, more than merely decodifying or consuming ideas organized by others in a piece of paper, literacy here becomes the ability to also codify letters, phrases, numbers, sentences and paragraphs in order to sell, put forth or communicate to the larger society as much as possible of the participants' views, values or whims. In short, this has been the way we have chosen to transform ourselves and others in our surroundings. Participants' roles are much more akin to knowledge producers than to the traditional ones of consumers of somebody else's knowledge.

Given the endless string of matters hollering in our ears for reforms, changes and transformations, our participants are led to realize the need for a continuing or lifelong process of learning in this rather dynamic and ever-changing world of ours. After all, without learning, only by chance intelligent action happens and to leave to chance the kinds of changes, reforms and transformations that we, our peers and the world are calling for would be simply irresponsible. If those that are better-off in society do not trust their future and fate to anybody else, why should the downtrodden or wretched of earth do so? Either we educate and train ourselves to be our own masters and the masters of our own neighborhoods or we just learn to resign to our short-, middle- and long-term misery because those

currently in charge of the universe are not about to loosen up their paws from our necks and relinquish their power over our lives.

In the final analysis, power is that kind of commodity that is always priceless; in other words, whoever has it does not give, lease or sell it away, unless they are unbalanced or suicidal. To negotiate our statuses in this world with the powers-that-be, we must learn to master the fundamentals of power, therefore, and this is not the kind of thing that a quick training will suffice. Rather, it is a matter of a lifetime hunting, search or pursuit. Therefore, whether we realize it or not, lifelong learning must be part of the infrastructure, substructure, structure, interstructure, intrastructure, metastructure, overstructure and superstructure of any society that wishes to call itself enlightened, sound, fair, humane and not self-destructive. Public libraries present themselves theoretically as the ideal providers of literacy, post-literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for the general public due to the fact that they welcome all age brackets, contrarily to public schools and (community) colleges that focus on children and young adults, respectively. Instead of capitalizing on the identification, storage and retrieval of data and information generated primarily by society's intelligentsia, library professionals must learn to do the same with data and information stemming from other quarters of society, however. To excuse oneself behind the label of objectivity, impartiality or professionalism is to continue the elitist tradition of serving the powers-that-be of our times.

In today's world there are not many excuses not to have in our shelves the views and voices of those who couldn't write a book. After all, there is a proliferation of multi-media learning centers that can easily capture images and voices together. Moreover, too many of those writing books do not have much more to say than what has already been said before, anyway. Therefore, why

should we support their "data and information businesses" by buying their products with our scarce tax dollars? It seems that library professionals could explore ways to also collect data and information formulated by those who still lack high-level literacy skills. To dismiss people's worldviews just because they happen to use different forms of expression and different media of communication definitely does not seem an intelligent professional behavior from those working with data and information. Whose data and information are we collecting, after all? Shall we allow the form to dictate the content and continue ignoring whatever is not ciphered in a database, diskette, book, journal, magazine, newspaper, photo, filmstrip, videocassette or the like? Be this as it may, if public libraries are to represent the general public's interests we still have a very long way to go. It seems that to be mindlessly ordering essentially from whatever the big publishing houses or high-tech outfits advertise is not necessarily the best way to serve a public library's public. If these libraries are to be truly deserving of the label of educational institutions, they definitely need to do a lot more than what they have been doing in such a field of work and study, it appears. Otherwise, they run the risk of being categorized very soon as business institutions about to be snatched away from the public by the highest bidders. Now, can we as a democratic society afford such a risk? Most certainly not and this is precisely why we must get busy with our research work.

The more programs, services and fixtures of public libraries are granted to for-profit business operators, the more the public of the public library will change. Efficiency and effectiveness then will be directly related to the proportion of high-paying patrons, customers and clients. In short, there is the need to find out who is the public library's public that today's library is actually serving vis-a-vis the one to whom its mission claims to be of service. All things considered, the whats

and hows of public libraries tend to define rather well their whoms. Consequently, these are some of the twentieth century issues that public library professionals may need to be considering for the time being.

Recommendations

Assuming that research is the pursuit of the "truths", facts of life or whatever works in a particular field of study or discipline, it is obvious that we are in need of great deal of research work in the areas of post-secondary education, libraries and lifelong learning. In the for-profit world, the company that waits around for research to be developed by others in the market may not last long enough to read any research findings, provided that such a finding will become available soon enough. In the not-for-profit world a similar culture or approach need to be considered: Every organization that is serious enough about its mission must engage itself in continuing research and development exercises. Instead of buying canned prescriptions or recommendations drawn out of somebody else's reality and thus research experience, maybe we all need to get in the mode of constantly searching for new, more efficient and effective ways of doing what we do. After all, no practitioner can really be proficient unless he or she is endlessly searching for better ways of carrying out their duties. Why can't we then have these practitioners to document their searches and researches in such a way that others elsewhere can perhaps benefit from their work because, after all contrary to what is the case in the for-profit world, there is no reason for secrecy here.

All things considered, NIPELLL perhaps could suggest that the recipients of post-secondary education, libraries and lifelong learning dollars start taking initiative and learning to update themselves in a more systematic, consistent and

regular fashion instead of doing the very same old stuff, as prescribed by the conventional body of knowledge developed by some scholars in some universities or research institutes somewhere in the country. Since nowhere is written that research in post-secondary, library and lifelong learning matters is a monopoly of any particular group of scholars, practitioners in these fields need to get started with their own research projects. Since research is a necessary requirement for the delivery of quality services, organizations that do not feel fit, comfortable or equipped enough to conduct research work in order to improve their praxes must be encouraged to establish partnerships with research-prone institutions, chiefly universities and research institutes. The current status of adult education and lifelong learning practice in Chicago and anywhere else, it seems, is so rudimentary, however, that even the research of our own practitioners can improve the whats and hows of what we have been doing. We must, however, take more responsibility for the way we do what we do.

Historically in this country education theory has been conceptualized by scholars and researchers with very little sense of accountability to low-income communities both in urban and rural America. Their knowledge, if any, of these have usually been the outcome of some cursory field trips, library readings and the like. Their brand of university-based, top-down or LEA-inspired education unfortunately has always been at odds with bottom-up, community-based educational efforts. For this reason, NIPELLL can definitely make a difference in assisting providers of post-secondary, libraries and lifelong learning services to move toward more collaborative, participatory or emancipative research modes. Such an encouragement would prompt funders and donors to be more open regarding those institutions concerned with the current processes of doing research work. Even though university-based and government-based researchers tend to lack

the preparation to carry out participatory or community-based education, those are the ones usually doing both the talking and the writing on those matters. Therefore, NIPELLL can certainly help change this picture by providing community-based educators with the same perks, privileges and resources that traditional scholars and conventional researchers have, which is a lot of time to read and write. Typically, community-based educators are overworked and grossly underpaid, when they are lucky enough to have jobs. After all, there is not a climate at this moment in this country much welcoming of bottom-up or community-based initiatives in the field of both formal and informal. Since " professional" educators have, through their LEAs, proven to be off target so many times before, this scenario calls for a change, and NIPELLL may very well be able to assist in such a process. Periodically, some sort of conferences, summer institutes, symposia, colloquia or the like could be organized for these research-minded practitioners to share their praxes. The more handle we get on the way we do what we do in these fields, the easier it will become to design a (quarterly, semesterly, annually, etc.) publication whose main purpose would be to challenge others to do better than what they have been doing. All in all, a career without a challenge is no different than a life without a challenge -- dull and boring. I am certain that nobody wants this sort of things in our profession. In addition, it would be great to think of some sort of NIPELLL-sponsored sabbaticals, fellowships, internships or the like to promote more opportunities for practitioners to learn with and from one another, if we are really serious about bottom-up or community-inspired modes of lifelong learning throughout this rather multi-cultural society. On-going dialogue and communication among practitioners has been one of the characteristics of dynamic and ever-changing fields of work and study ; after all, bodies of knowledge do not grow rapidly enough without a consistent

cross-fertilization or exchange of ideas and praxes among practitioners and researchers toiling in post-secondary education, libraries and lifelong learning arenas. In short, at this point these are the views of a Chicago-based library literacy practitioner.

NOTE: These tentative remarks and observations stemmed from two gatherings with Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative staffers plus four in-depth interviews with nine associates of Chicago's Southside Literacy Coalition, Westside Literacy Coalition, Northside Literacy and the Hispanic Literacy Council in the month of February and March, 1995. Instead of predefined questions, these interviews characterized themselves by broad issues such as community-based education, public libraries, local educational agencies or LEAs, community-based organizations or CBOs, public libraries, literacy, lifelong learning, post-secondary education, training, research, universities, professors, teachers, tutors, volunteers, students, learners, program participants, materials, methods and techniques. The interviewees were asked to pick and choose the topics about which they could speak for about one hour. The views represented here, however, are not necessarily subscribed in their totality by any of the above-indicated individuals or entities. At best, they reflect the author's current stage of reflection on the challenge of learning to (un)learn for a better life. For further information, please, do not hesitate to contact Elio DeArrudah at the Chicago Public Library Literacy Initiative through (312) 747-4162 or (312) 747-4089.

Paper F

Public Libraries and Community-Based Education:
Making the Connection for Life Long Learning
- A Conference -

ADULT LITERACY AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING

ESSENTIAL ISSUES

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ADULT LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING: ESSENTIAL ISSUES

Adult Lifelong Learning Programs Provided by DALC

The Delta Adult Literacy Council, Inc., is a volunteer, nonprofit organization affiliated with the Washington, D.C. Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Metropolitan Baptist Church, and the Nation's oldest literacy organization, Laubach Literacy Action, a United States program of Laubach Literacy International. The Council, established in 1987, seeks to recruit, assess, train, support, and match volunteer tutors and adult new readers. They thus acquire basic level skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and mathematics which they need in order to participate fully in society. The Council's aim is to raise a level of awareness of literacy needs in Washington, D.C., and to work cooperatively with other literacy projects in Washington, D.C.

Since 1987, the Council has trained over 300 volunteer tutors who have contributed more than 20,000 hours of volunteer time. These volunteers have tutored more than 250 new readers from all sections of Washington, D.C. These adult learners have ranged from 18 to 80 years of age and have consisted of 116 males and 134 females in addition to teenage mothers who were taught to read to their young children for the first time. Among other achievements, they have learned to:

- ride public transportation
- read a book
- read the newspaper
- read prescription bottles

- read the driver's education manual
- read and fill out application forms
- read about the health hazards of smoking and stop
- read well enough to take the tutor-training class and tutor
- read well enough to apply for a higher level job
- read well enough to enroll in General Education Development (GED) and job training programs and be successful.

The Council has demonstrated effectiveness in implementing its programs by conducting 14 tutor-training classes, recruiting, assessing and supporting adult new readers and matching and rematching 250 tutor/student pairs.

Tutor-training

In 1986 Delta Sigma Theta Sorority joined Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS), a major national media outreach project, to assist in combating illiteracy in the United States. PLUS was a public service media campaign undertaken by the American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., and the Public Broadcasting Service. PLUS operated in two phases: outreach development and awareness-raising through media public service announcements.

The initial involvement of the Washington, D.C. Alumnae Chapter was to establish a Literacy Center at the Metropolitan Baptist Church. The Chapter then conducted an awareness workshop, providing participants the opportunity to become aware of various instructional programs used to teach adults. Following these phases, two training programs were planned for volunteer tutors. The Chapter contacted Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), the Nation's

oldest adult literacy organization, in Syracuse, New York, for the purpose of locating a trainer. The closest certified Laubach trainer was imported from West Virginia to train an initial core of 26 volunteers. Since that time Delta's adult literacy program has become an independent Laubach council. By taking the training courses offered at local and national conferences, the Council has a supervisory tutor-trainer who has become an area-wide supervisor to supervisory tutor-trainers, a tutor-trainer and two apprentice tutor-trainers soon to become full-fledged trainers.

To become a Laubach-certified trainer, a participant must enroll in a 12 to 15-hour workshop, tutor a student for at least 40 hours, and take an additional workshop to learn to become a tutor-trainer. The average training spans a period of two to three years while the apprentice tutor practices each segment of the training module under the experienced eye of the supervisory tutor-trainer. Evaluations and instructional techniques are incorporated throughout the tutor-training period. The apprenticeship is essentially the same for supervisory trainers in order to ensure an effective training team.

The training workshops may take place over two to three weekends or may be conducted in three-hour segments once a week for five weeks. Some councils find that interspersing Saturdays and weekday evenings is more convenient.

The training materials are provided by LLA, which constantly seeks to update and redesign its curriculum. Just recently, the Laubach Training by Design materials have been updated. The new

curriculum helps trainers to assess local needs and plan, conduct, and evaluate training. Training by Design guides also include general tips for conducting effective training. Further, the program guides include proposed presentations and alternative activities.

Delta Adult Literacy Council (DALC) is also fortunate to have a reading specialist and an urban education specialist among its trainers. As a consequence, DALC has been able to offer more varied instructional techniques.

Recruitment and Support of Students

The target population of adult new readers who are recruited by DALC is reading at a 0 to 8th grade level. Students assessed beyond that level are referred to GED or other higher level programs.

Initially, students were referred to the Council from other existing literacy-providing organizations. More recently, students have been referred from national and city-wide literacy hotlines, from other students, and from various social service agencies.

Once a referral is made to the Council, the name and telephone number of the potential student are obtained, and the student is contacted to schedule an interview. The student is assured of confidentiality, and every effort is made to ease any anxiety during the first telephone contact.

The intake interview usually lasts for approximately 30 minutes. The student is greeted with a warm handshake and encouraged to sit to the left as the interviewer fills in the

student data sheet. The information consists of the student's name, address, telephone, ethnic background, gender, and at least one goal that the student is seeking to achieve. In addition, the interviewer records the marital status, ages of children, if any, the level of education attained and the reason for dropping out, if applicable. The final data before assessment consists of the days and times that the student is available for tutoring.

Assessment, an initial evaluation of the learner's literacy-related strengths, weaknesses, goals, and interests, is a crucial step. DALC believes that most of its potential students are test-shy because of past failures and seeks to provide a minimal, though sufficient, assessment. The Slosson Word Recognition Test is used for basic screening and, if more information is needed, a potential learner is administered an Informal Reading Inventory.

While the results are tabulated, the learner is given a suggested topic and asked to write a paragraph. If the student is unable to produce a writing sample, he/she is asked to write from dictation. If, again, no sample is produced, a sentence is written by the interviewer and the student is asked to copy. With the information gained from the intake data, the literacy assessment, and the writing sample, a recommendation is made to provide the tutor with some knowledge of the level of materials and techniques to use with the potential learner.

Several other factors are discussed at the initial interview. The student is informed that although the tutoring is free, there is a charge for the materials used. He/she is informed of how and

when contact will be made by the tutor and that together they will decide where and how often the tutoring will occur. Tutoring usually occurs in a public place, such as in an office, library, church, or school, at which tutors are encouraged to use private rooms. The suggested time for tutoring is one to two hours two times weekly.

The process of referral, telephone contact, initial interview, and the first tutoring session usually spans a period of several months and is dependent upon the availability of trained volunteer tutors.

After tutoring sessions begin, students, as well as tutors, are provided with continued support. A student group meets once monthly to explore goals, participate in group discussion and decision-making, and to provide peer support. In addition, a library is maintained with adult books at various reading levels for the students and resource and instructional materials for the tutors. A quarterly newsletter is also mailed to each student and tutor. Students are encouraged to submit their writing to be published in the newsletter, and tutors are requested to assist with the written articles and in reading the newsletter.

Tutor/Student Matching and Re-Matching

According to an LLA "Program Management Fact Sheet," matching is more than simply determining whether tutor and learner can be in the same place at the same time. It involves considering the

compatibility of the pair, the needs and interests of the learner, the strengths of the tutor, and other factors that will lead to success.

Student matches are usually assigned at the third session of a five-session workshop. Telephone contact between tutor and student is practiced in the form of role-playing, and many various scenarios are presented. Results are discussed in the fourth session. A place and date for the first tutor/student meeting is set. Tutors are encouraged to meet with their new learners before the final session, and the first tutoring sessions are analyzed and suggestions made.

Re-matching of tutors and students is frequently necessary. Tutors and students must sometimes drop out because of illness, moving, family crises, or changing employment hours. Less often, students or tutors may request a replacement.

Target Population of DALC Programs

Geographical Areas

Adult learners in DALC programs are from varied geographical locations in the City and surrounding areas. The highest percentage requesting help reside in the Southeast sector of the City, which is also labeled a high-crime, low-employment, low-income sector. The Northeast and Northwest sections provide approximately equal percentages, while the Southwest provides relatively few. A small percentage of learners come from areas surrounding the City.

Composition

(1) The majority of the adults in DALC'S programs are African American, which reflects the general population in Washington, D.C. A small percentage of Caucasian, Filipino, West Indian, and Africans are also present. Approximately 75 percent of the target population is employed, although in low-paying positions.

(2) Students with varying degrees of learning disabilities comprise 50 percent of the student population. Two percent of the students are physically handicapped.

(3) Ages range from 20 to 70 with almost half in the 30 to 39 age group. One-quarter of the new learners dropped out of school between the seventh and eleventh grades, with about one-tenth having completed high school. Of the new learners, approximately 60 percent attended school in the District of Columbia, while about 30 percent attended school in Southern States.

There are equal numbers of male and female students.

Size of Target Population

DALC has matched and re-matched 250 tutor/student pairs. At the end of FY 1994 approximately 89 tutors and students were actively engaged. Five percent of the missing students attained a GED or moved on to higher education. A large percentage achieved at least one goal and dropped out after one or two years in the program, which is the average length of retention.

Collaboration With Other Literacy Service-providers

Linkages With Other Agencies, Including Churches

Since its inception, Delta Adult Literacy Council has sought to operate within the framework of existing community agencies. The Council has been co-sponsored by Metropolitan Baptist Church which is located in the heart of the Shaw District of Washington, D.C., a community of primarily African American, low-income residents. The Church consists of a population which includes many professional and highly visible members of the Washington, D.C., area and has adopted various ministries which provide social services to the surrounding neighborhood. The pastor, Dr. H. Beecher Hicks, Jr., and the Church leaders have been very supportive of the Literacy Council: Space has been provided for an office, for training, and for tutoring. Many of the Church members have served as volunteer tutors and in other volunteer capacities. Dr. Hicks is an honorary member of the Board of Directors, and his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Hicks, serves on the Board of Directors.

The Council has trained tutors for several other churches throughout the City and assisted these churches in implementing tutorial programs. One of these churches established a tutorial and counseling program under the Court with young adult prisoners in a halfway house. Other churches have elected to tutor adult, low-level readers in their congregations or neighborhoods.

Another avenue of partnership with community agencies is through providing tutors to existing programs in other nonprofit agencies. Tutors have been trained and placed in substance abuse

rehabilitation centers, in a Youth Services facility, and in homeless shelters. In one such agency, the Council has provided consultation and resources to establish a GED program in addition to providing tutors for lower-level readers. The Council has also provided assessment and matching of tutors with students.

The Council has collaborated with Neighborhood Health Clinics to develop a Family Literacy program. The goal of this program has been to promote literacy of teen parents and their young children. Social workers at the clinics used "Shared Beginnings", a guide and idea book developed by Reading Is Fundamental (RIF), Inc., to encourage teen parents to read to their babies and nurture in their children a love for books and reading from their earliest years. This program was piloted as a cooperative venture between Delta Adult Literacy Council and RIF, Inc., with funding from several corporations, including the Southland Corporation. A major component of this program has been to distribute books to the parents and to enroll them in a library program.

The program sought to help young parents in the following ways:

- Understand the importance of reading to their children at a very young age
- Understand how other activities -- talking, singing, playing, going places, and telling stories -- lead to reading and prepare children for school
- Create an environment for learning at home

- Discover that reading can be a comforting activity -- another way to keep a young child happy
- Rediscover the pleasures of reading through the joy that reading aloud brings to their babies.

City-wide Literacy Programs

Delta Adult Literacy Council networks with other literacy service agencies throughout the City to provide more comprehensive services. An umbrella group operating from the Martin Luther King Public Library, the D.C. Adult Literacy Network, is made up of over 30 literacy service-providing agencies in the District. The Network's quarterly meetings are open to the public.

The Network has an Action Committee and a Resource Committee. The Action Committee is an advocacy group. It promotes issues such as plain language writing by public information groups and fair GED testing practices. The Resource Committee develops and distributes special teaching, reading, and training materials. It also arranges for special services for adult learners such as free vision screening and voting machine demonstrations. The Network periodically has held literacy conferences and assists with the National Adult Literacy Congress, which is a national meeting of adult new learners. The Network publishes bimonthly the "D.C. Adult Literacy Newsletter," which features literacy service-providers, profiles adult learners, provides national literacy news, teaching tips, reviews of new materials, and upcoming events.

The Network has been instrumental in establishing a Literacy Helpline which refers students and tutors to service-providers. A Regional Literacy Directory is also published and updated annually, and provides information about all known literacy programs in Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, and Suburban Maryland.

The D.C. Literacy Resource Center was established as a result of the National Literacy Act of 1991. The Center is a joint project of the Adult Basic Education section of the D.C Public Library and Howard University School of Continuing Education. The D.C. Literacy Resource Center has published a list of available materials, including books, audio cassettes, and videotapes. The Center also has conducted a series of professional workshops for literacy service-providers.

The Council networks with literacy service-providers in the City. Areas of networking include referral, joint recruitment and fundraising, and sharing of resources and materials.

State Advisory Council on Literacy and Adult Education

A provision of the National Literacy Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-73) requires that a State may designate a body to act as a State Advisory Council on Adult Education and Literacy, appointed by and responsible to the Governor, or in the case of the District of Columbia, the Mayor. The Executive Director of DALC is a member of this Advisory Council. The duties of the Advisory Council are to advise the State Education Agency on the development of a State plan for literacy and adult education that fulfills the needs of the State, especially with respect to the needs of the labor

market, economic development goals, and the needs of individuals. In addition, the Advisory Council seeks to develop and implement measurable literacy goals and the improvement of the quality of literacy services. The Advisory Council meets at least four times each year.

Barriers to Providing Services and Reaching Users

Funding

In Washington, D.C., there are many literacy and adult education service-providers, including the Adult Basic Education Department of the D.C. Public Schools, who compete for a limited amount of funding. Part B, Subpart 1. Section 322 (a) (1), of the Adult Education Act, as amended by the National Literacy Act of 1991 (P.L. 102-73), requires that local educational agencies, public or private nonprofit, community-based organizations and institutions which serve educationally disadvantaged adults will be included and have direct and equitable access to all Federal funds provided.

Two years, numerous meetings, telephone calls and letters, testimony before City Council members, and unlimited persistence were required before a Request for Proposal was published by the State Office and disseminated to local agencies. Prior to that time, all funding from the State office was used by the D.C. Public Schools, Adult Basic Education Branch. A special problem exists in the District of Columbia, as it is not a State, and the State Education Agency is a department of the D.C. Public Schools system.

After submission of a proposal in 1993, DALC was one of six community organizations to receive State Education Agency funding. Although the funding is essential to the success of the program, the application and reporting process is extremely time-consuming, requiring monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports. Because of the competitive nature of the grant, there is no assurance of any funding, and the amount granted has not been the amount requested.

Therefore, even though a major amount of time is spent in applying for corporation/foundation grants and in other fundraising activities and events, DALC finds that funding is not adequate for staff, equipment, and materials. Furthermore, the time spent in fundraising activities prevents the staff from spending most of its time teaching and delivering services to economically and educationally disadvantaged adult readers.

In addition, funding is also needed to provide scholarships for volunteers who are unable to pay the registration fee for instructional materials used in tutor-training classes.

Recruitment and Retention

Statistics from D.C. Government Indices (1988) and the D.C. Public Schools' 4-year State Plan for Adult Education (1990-1993) (see Appendix A), relate that less than 10 percent of the population in the District, as Nationwide, are presently being served in adult education and literacy programs. A problem facing providers is how to identify and recruit the missing 90 percent and how to reduce the now existing 70 percent of adults who leave programs within one year. Some factors which have been identified

by researchers and practitioners which indicate why adults participate in adult literacy or basic education programs include educational advancement, self-improvement, economic need, job advancement, and family responsibilities. Reasons why they do not participate include low perception of need, situational barriers, and dislike of school. Many of the adults who do participate have short term goals such as obtaining a driver's license or filling out a job application, rather than perceiving the development of literacy skills as a lifelong process.

Technology

The use of technology in literacy programs remains an unfulfilled dream. There is a lack of funding both to purchase computers and to create or to purchase cost-effective software. (Wagner, 1993)

Lack of Convenience

There are many factors that influence the success of literacy programs. Although volunteers contribute many hours, their volunteer commitment is uncertain. Sites for individual tutoring and small group instruction become more of a problem as enrollment increases. Additional problems are transportation and child and elder care, particularly during late evening, after the normal workday.

Evaluation of Literacy Council Services

Because of the fragmentation of services in Washington, D.C., evaluation of literacy and adult education services is in the early stages of implementation. After a painful process, Quality

Indicators (see Appendix B) were developed and disseminated in 1993 as required by the National Literacy Act of 1991. Many literacy programs have never heard of the Quality Indicators, and no structure is in place for evaluation.

Factors Essential for a More Effective Program

Coordinated Delivery System

Each existing adult, continuing, and community school and literacy service-provider should be a component of a comprehensive system for the delivery of literacy and adult basic education (Reisner, 1993). Coordination of this effort must extend to the operational level of the agencies and organizations involved to reduce duplication of service and territorial issues. At present, all of the adult education programs in the City are reaching less than 10 percent of the City's more than 100,000 low literate or out-of-school youth and adults (see Appendix A). A comprehensive strategy is needed to increase the percentage served.

With the passage of the Adult Education Act of 1966, a meaningful Federal financial presence was established in addressing the problem of adult illiteracy. Since that time the public schools have assumed a major role in improving adult basic education. To increase literacy services and those served, the public schools must sharpen their focus and include establishment of family literacy programs to ensure that all parents become at least functionally literate. Schools can also provide space and teachers and assist with recruitment and public awareness.

As the workplace becomes more technologically advanced, the literacy requirements of the job marketplace continue to climb. Therefore, the private sector must become more involved as a major component of a comprehensive literacy thrust. Businesses and corporations, as well as government agencies, can establish workplace literacy centers, provide funding and volunteers, and give release time to employees who wish to be trained and serve as literacy teachers/tutors.

In "The Handbook of Adult Literacy Issues for Community Members" (1994), a recommendation is made that the literacy field must have the cooperative support of other institutions in the community that are committed to the development of human potential and social justice. Specifically, schools, churches, synagogues, human service agencies, fraternal organizations, private nonprofit groups, and Community Based Organizations have the internal structure to provide assistance with space, travel, recruitment, volunteers, and public relations.

A well publicized media-inciting event or series of events should be held to promote literacy needs on the local level as well as in the workplace, classroom, and university. The media must be instrumental in providing informational and recruitment services to raise awareness among the general public and various major community sectors as to the dimensions of the literacy crises in Washington, D.C. There is a need for a comprehensive and coordinated City-wide literacy campaign. Such a campaign was held in Baltimore at the outset of its literacy initiative. Mayor

Schmoke, founder of "Baltimore Reads," and many high visibility Baltimoreans and the general public were most conspicuous during the opening event, which was a month-long Read-A-thon.

Political Advocacy and Support

Literacy education has historically led to political activity. Arlene Fingeret (1991), a literacy advocate, cites how she first became involved in adult literacy by teaching a group of women in a housing development how to write letters to government officials to complain about housing and how to do research on the housing laws. Ms. Fingeret believes that the Federal policy question should be "How can literacy development support communities in addressing their issues?" Or, "How does change happen?"

Central Recruitment, Assessment, and Support

Recruitment and assessment should be coordinated Citywide and be based upon current research. Coordination of assessment should address the needs of individuals and families to prepare them for work, citizenship, and/or home management. The needs of the handicapped and the elderly should likewise be determined, and a City-wide referral system should be established. Once an individual or family enters the system, they should be followed through various service-providers until their needs are met.

A recent study concluded "that a single reading score is inadequate for measuring student progress in adult literacy programs and that grade equivalents are unreliable for estimating gain over time when fewer than 200 scores are aggregated" (Venezky, 1994). The most commonly used adult literacy test (TABE) was found

to be unreliable, and a functional literacy test (TALS) proved to be more reliable, though not completely adequate. The findings of this research suggest the need to construct a multiple indicator system for evaluating adult literacy constituents. Portfolio assessment is one option suggested by Reif (1995). The portfolio is a collection of materials that may include written pieces, visual representation, lists, tapes, and/or pictures.

Integration of Literacy Training and Human Services

Services must be structured to serve a highly disadvantaged population with literacy as a central concern. Reisner (1993) states that social issues such as racism, sexism, class inequality, and poverty must be incorporated into the services. Research demonstrates that skills training, employment preparation, and the development of parenting and child development skills can contribute to "(1) increased understanding of literacy issues among human service providers, (2) informal literacy training in many service contexts, (3) new opportunities to ground literacy instruction in real life applications, and (4) improvements in the capacity of human service agencies to serve persons who have previously failed to achieve literacy goals." (Reisner, 1993, p.7)

Every effort should be made to provide centralized and convenient sites which are open to the public on a full-time basis. All services should be accessible from these central sites. Transportation, as well as child and elder care, must be available.

Increased Funding

Increased funding is necessary if any progress is to be gained in raising the literacy levels of the American population. Increased enrollment should be a goal of all literacy programs. There is an impact on funding when the number of adults who enroll in adult literacy programs increase as they did between 1980 and 1992, during which time they nearly doubled from 2 million to over 3.8 million. (Handbook of Adult Literacy Issues for Community Members, 1994)

In order to provide quality services, programs must undergo staff development (Pates, Andrew, Fingeret, 1994), order new materials, provide computer training, and recruit and support additional students. (Handbook of Adult Literacy Issues for Community Members, 1994)

Many literacy organizations within the City are competing for the same funding from Federal and State agencies, from United Way, and from corporations and foundations. Funding must become more accessible, less time-consuming, and more responsive to the needs of each agency.

Interaction with the Public Library System

The Public Library System has a long history of service to literacy and lifelong learning (McCook, 1992). The District of Columbia Public Library has a large Adult Basic Education Collection including easy to read books for adults and literacy teaching materials. The Collection also has teacher-training

videos and other resources available for public use. In addition, the Library's Adult Learning Center provides tutoring space.

Mentioned earlier were the D.C Adult Literacy Network and the ESL Network, which are examples of collaboration and coalition-building sponsored by the Library. As a result of this network, a Literacy Helpline and a referral system have been established for volunteer tutors and students. In addition, a Regional Directory of service-providers has been published and is updated annually.

The D.C. Literacy Resource Center, in addition to housing literacy materials, has sponsored a series of professional staff development workshops for administrators, teachers, and tutors. The workshops spanned such issues as assessment, cultural diversity, learning disabilities, multilevel teaching, the use of computers, and how to teach basic math skills.

To further explore how computers can best be used in literacy instruction, the D.C. Public Library has set up an adult literacy computer lab, CALICO DC, at the main library. The lab will give literacy students and literacy-providers in the Greater Metropolitan Washington area a chance to "test-drive" educational software in a non-sales setting. Literacy-providers who are interested in incorporating technology into their instruction can use the MLK lab to make informed decisions about what technology they want to acquire. Service-providers may make appointments to visit the lab with small groups of adult learners. The lab will be staffed with a full-time adult learner and will be affiliated with

a national organization, "Play to Win," that is supporting "community access in computing" in cities around the country.

One of the most successful programs launched by the ABE Office is the adult new readers' book discussion group, "A Feel for Books." This program brings new readers together to discuss books and stories on a deeper level. The groups meet monthly and have helped a number of students to experience the joy of reading as well as to develop more confidence and trust in their new reading skills.

The Role of a Federal Research Agency

Data Collection Needed

Federal research agencies such as the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) have made considerable contributions to the field of adult literacy. Additional information which would be of importance to literacy programs includes research in the following areas:

- How to target, recruit, and retain participants
- How to provide continued and updated staff training and development
- Developing a model for planning, implementing, and funding comprehensive literacy centers which provide integrated services, as described in Section VI
- The effects of language, vision, and hearing disabilities on literacy attainment

- Nationwide program successes
- Involvement of community institutions and the private sector
- Assessment and evaluation of students and programs
- How to develop a stronger political voice

Anticipated Problems

Because of the nature of adult learning, particularly at the lower level, research teams and program administrators experience difficulty in collecting statistical data. As portfolio and other types of alternative assessment become more widespread in use, this problem will increase.

There is great concern throughout the Nation because of the changes in economic and social conditions associated with the "Contract with America." Education, in general, and particularly adult education, is already feeling the heavy hand of recision. Now, more than ever, a strong voice is needed to establish adult literacy as a priority and to convince law-makers that an increase of focus on adult learning will have far-reaching gains for families and children.

A third problem exists in adult literacy because there is no legal requirement that adults must be literate. Goal 5 of America 2000, a series of six national educational goals published by the Nation's Governors in 1990, states that by the year 2000 every adult American will be literate (see Appendix C). This goal was established as a response to what some perceived as a crisis in our society. The implications for OERI of the non-mandated nature of

adult literacy is that research must be geared towards determining the effects of illiteracy in a technological world and a global economy. This may lead to a requirement that adults become at least functionally literate.

Overcoming Barriers

As the knowledge gained from research becomes more available to the literacy service community and to the general public and community institutions, the private sector and local, as well as State and Federal government sectors, will have to provide increased support to the field of literacy (Frey, Gilliam, 1993). Adult educators must assume responsibility for providing research information to National, State, and local governments to insure that adult literacy becomes a priority and that the Nation moves toward the realization of National Education Goal 5. This would naturally require that funds be made available for this purpose. OERI may want to consider providing research to encourage local and State educational agencies to make literacy a responsibility. This would open the door for community institutions to promote adult literacy, including family literacy and literacy for the unemployed and unemployable.

Dissemination of Information

Public and private radio, TV, and talk shows must become more active in promoting public awareness of literacy needs and successes.

Public libraries can become more involved by bombarding the public with community displays which depict the benefits and enrollment process to acquire literacy and lifelong learning.

Informational tapes and compact discs are very motivational avenues to capture the interest of the target population.

Finally, literacy must join the super highway, for electronic networks remove the isolation and stigma of low literacy as adults share information and experiences in computer-based group discussions. Distance-learning systems also bring the best teachers from around the country to the most remote learners.

As the need arises, software and hardware development will become priorities, and the potential for the use of technology to benefit adult literacy will be tapped.

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APPENDICES

Some Statistics on Literacy Needs in D.C.

As far back as 1978, the Metropolitan Board of Trade and the National Alliance of Business conducted a survey of employers in the Washington metropolitan area, and found that 26% of the employers surveyed listed a lack of basic skills as a common deficiency among applicants for entry level and low skill job openings. Since that time, additional studies have shown that for those students who do learn the basic skills in school, the gap between the skills learned in school and those needed in the workplace has widened, and that even the high school graduates from the city's schools have made only marginal gains in acquiring higher level literacy skills.

Other factors employers have to consider are the following:

- 130,000 or 26% of D.C.'s adult population over the age of 25 have less than a high school education; half of whom have not gone beyond 8th grade.

- 25,500 youths/adults between the ages of 18 and 24 have not completed high school; only 10% of whom are estimated to be enrolled in any adult education program.

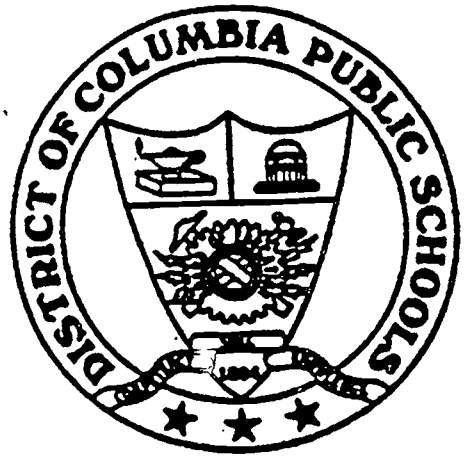
- 30,000 of the above populations are young mothers on public assistance, for whom the welfare department has a mandate from the federal government to place in jobs or job training.

- The dropout rate in the city's schools borders on 40-50%; the federal government has estimated the figure to be at or above 60%.

- The dropout rate from adult education and literacy programs, with few exceptions, borders on 60-70% the first year of study; not unlike the national average.

- At least 25% of more than 3,000 adult learners who've been at one of D.C.'s oldest community based literacy programs for literacy training are high school graduates who are reading below the fourth grade reading level.

(Sources: D.C. Government Indices, 1988; D.C. Public Schools, Four-Year State Plan for Adult Education, 1990-1993; Greater Washington Research Center studies and reports on *Strategies for Reducing Chronic Poverty*, 1989.)



QUALITY INDICATORS

FOR

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1993-94

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
STATE OFFICE

Appendix C

The National Education Goals

Goal 1

By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

Goal 2

By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

Goal 3

By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so that they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

Goal 4

By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

Goal 5

By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Goal 6

By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Public Libraries, Lifelong Learning, and Older Adults: Background and Recommendations

by

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Public Libraries, Lifelong Learning, and Older Adults: Background and Recommendations

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Introduction

Public libraries are a key access point for community-based education for lifelong learners. Community based and locally supported, libraries link independent learners, materials, programs, and other community agencies, and provide a common touchstone for all segments of the population.

The Public Library Mission: Support For Lifelong Learning

Public libraries were founded and continue to serve as premier institutions for lifelong learning. The American public library is committed to service to all individuals, regardless of educational level, socio-economic status, or age. Its multifaceted informational, educational, social, and cultural roles provide an ideal philosophical foundation for learning opportunities for older adults. The provision of information, materials and services covering a vast array of subjects and the emphasis on the individual provide a rich mosaic of opportunities for the widely diverse group melded together into the category of "older adult." The public library's traditional mission of serving the independent learner has resulted in a service structure ideally suited to adult learners.

In summarizing his research on adult learners, Penland (1978, p. 6) noted that adults "often feel a strong need to establish the pace and control the character of their learning experiences." Most adults express a preference for independent learning over formalized courses for a number of reasons: pacing, learning style, flexibility and the ability to change,

control of structure, lack of classes, immediacy, time limitations, dislike of a classroom setting, expense, and transportation (Tough, 1979, p. 39). It appears that the very existence of opportunities for choice may in and of itself promote enhanced physical and mental well-being in older adults. "The negative consequences of aging may be retarded, reversed or possibly prevented by returning to the aged the right to make decisions and a feeling of competence" (Langer and Rodin, 1978).

The fundamental characteristics of the public library serve to underscore its suitability as an integral part of the learning society. The Commission on Non-Traditional Study found that "the public library should be strengthened to become a far more powerful instrument for nontraditional education than is now the case...it is a free institution where the individual has open access to great quantities of information. It exists in great numbers, possesses the materials of knowledge, has a public service staff, and is a referral point to other resources within the educational network"(Gould, 1978, pp. 82-83).

Public libraries offer a variety of access points and educational opportunities. The public library is the only major educational institution with a mission and tradition of providing learning opportunities throughout the entire human lifespan and is the most widely available institution that freely provides continuing education once the earner has completed secondary school. Supported by a multidisciplinary approach to lifelong learning, this mandate provides an opportunity for continuity, integration, and choice (Van Fleet, 1990).

Libraries are not necessarily new to older adult patrons. The public library frequently is an institution they have called on over the course of a lifetime and this familiarity provides security and a sense of stability. The transition to using the library for "older adult" services

should be virtually seamless.

The intergenerational focus of the public library fosters a sense of belonging to the community. Older adults are not isolated or peripheral. They continue to visit the same building and to avail themselves of the same services as other age groups.

Older adults in the public library setting may choose the learning approach with which they are most comfortable. Those who choose to learn independently and individually may do so; those who prefer programs, discussions, or group activities will also find opportunities. Older adult learners may choose to attend programs designed for a general adult audience, be part of intergenerational programs that bring older adults and young adults or children together, or participate in programs targeted primarily to older adults.

Public Library Services in Support of Lifelong Learners

Basic library services are designed to provide learning opportunities to diverse clientele with a variety of educational needs and learning preferences. They take the form of varied and organized library collections, reference and information services, programming, and outreach services. The extent and manner in which these are focused for older adults vary with community need and demand as well as awareness and expertise of local library staff. While some libraries have designated older adult specialists or outreach specialists, others choose a more integrated approach. Studies of library services to older adults indicate a wide variety of approaches and programs (Turock, 1990; Van Fleet, 1990, Wallace, 1990).

Acquisition and Organization of Materials

The public library is perhaps most widely recognized for collecting educational materials on a wide variety of subjects, written at a variety of levels, for a diverse clientele. For the most

part, areas of interest to older adults fall broadly within interest areas of the general adult population and, in many cases, there is little change in the individual's interests and learning patterns. It may be that different specific topics within given areas are of primary concern, and it is the responsibility of the librarian to ensure that these areas are represented in the collection.

The importance of extending appropriately selected and organized collections to the older adult community is delineated in section 2 of "Guidelines for Library Service to Older Adults," which states that librarians must "Promote information and resources on aging and its implications not only to older adults themselves but also to family members, professionals in the field of aging, and other persons interested in the aging process" (Library Services to an Aging Population Committee, 1987). While librarians will have a grounding in a variety of review and collection resources, they will need to include special focus tools such as Brazil's (1990) *Building Library Collections on Aging* to ensure adequate coverage.

Reference and Information Services

Reference librarians interpret questions, provide information to individual patrons and offer guidance in the use of the library and its resources. Reference librarians are familiar with the various literatures of a variety of disciplines and are astute at discovering links among disciplines to fully answer questions or to help guide an individual's independent learning activities. To provide excellence in service to older adult learners, they must constantly renew their knowledge of resources available and update and organize such aids as vertical files, bibliographies, and learning plans. Librarians who serve older adults scan popular journals such as *Modern Maturity* or *Mature Outlook* to keep current on topics and issues of interest to the older adult community. In addition, they collect, read, display, and organize for future

reference brochures and catalogs from such organizations as Elderhostel, the National Council on Aging, Inc. or local community groups.

An integral part of reference and information services is referral to appropriate agencies and institutions, and many libraries have developed community information databases in which they list directory and purpose statements for local agencies and organizations.

Some public libraries also provide the services of a reader's advisor. Although frequently focused on fiction guidance, advisors may also work with individual patrons to guide a course of study in nonfiction areas. Reader's advisors are aware of the diverse interests within the older adult population, and recognize that while some readers want sensitive novels about growing older or prefer an older adult as protagonist, many older adults will be more interested in genre, style, setting, or level of characterization than on whether or not the book is about or for an older adult. To properly serve older adult readers, librarians need to be familiar with such special topic bibliographies as *Of a Certain Age* (Rubin, 1990) or *Aging With Style and Savvy* (Donavin, 1990).

Programming

Programming for all age groups is a popular service in many libraries. These programs cover a wide variety of topics and have different purposes and expectations, and audiences will vary. Lecture programs may provide information on daily living topics from low fat cooking to investment information to family relationships. Elderhostel programs offer formal education activities in areas from jazz to botany. Book discussions stimulate intellectual activity and social interaction; reminiscence programming for older adults allows them to validate and analyze their experiences and sometimes share them with another generation, either through direct interaction

or through recording in print or on tape.

Programs are often the focus of interagency cooperation. For instance, the National Council on Aging, Inc. offered "Silver Editions," a library-based, scholar led humanities discussion program series. Funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the immensely successful programs brought together public libraries, university scholars, and local service providers (Liroff and Van Fleet, 1992).

For other programs, libraries draw from a wide spectrum of speakers representing community agencies, organizations, and businesses. Libraries may provide meeting room facilities for programs sponsored by these organizations, or may act as co-sponsors.

Outreach

Outreach involves planning services for individuals who may not be able to take advantage of in-library services or who have not traditionally done so. Typically, these services are provided to people who are institutionalized or homebound, and may take the form of deposit collections to the institution, delivery service of materials, programs, or books by mail. These services are specifically outlined in section 4 of the "Guidelines for Library Service to Older Adults," which requires librarians to "Provide library service appropriate to the special needs of older adults, including the minority who are geographically isolated, homebound, institutionalized, or disabled" (Library Services to an Aging Population Committee, 1987). It is an interesting quirk of library service that outreach services to older adults are visible, easily segmented, and widely reported, while basic, integrated service to the majority of older adult patrons who are fully functional and able to take advantage of the full spectrum of services is not well documented.

The term outreach is also sometimes used to include marketing and awareness activities. Under this umbrella, public librarians may take part in community sponsored interagency events, such as Senior Information Expositions or Community Health Fairs, in order to alert potential patrons and other service providers to the support available at the library.

Knowledge Necessary for Planning and Implementing Services

Library services have essentially the same goals for all patrons - to enrich leisure, to gather and disseminate information for effective living, and to provide for continued growth and learning throughout the lifespan. The specific manner in which these goals are fulfilled will vary according to community need and demand. The key is ensuring that the needs of older adults are met while remembering that the range of needs and abilities is as great as for any other segment of the population. To provide effective service for older learners, the librarian will have a three-tiered knowledge base.

Core Knowledge of Library and Information Science

First, the librarian will have a thorough knowledge of the library and information science profession. The core knowledge areas include:

- intellectual freedom;
- evaluation, analysis, acquisition, retrieval and organization of information and materials, regardless of physical format;
- information seeking behaviors, use of information, learning patterns;
- interpersonal communications, interviewing patrons and interpreting needs of individuals, discourse analysis;
- methods, strategies, and resources for needs analysis;

- evaluation and analysis of materials and services;
- planning and management of library and information services.

Knowledge of Public Library Service

The second tier involves relating the core to public library service. A copy of the document "Expectations for Entry Level Public Librarians," (Education of Public Librarians Committee, 1995) is attached and provides a more detailed picture of the knowledge necessary for public librarians. The basic knowledge areas are summarized here:

- public library mission, role, and clientele;
- public administration, political context of the library in the community, and public finance;
- community needs analysis, information needs and library use by diverse constituencies;
- outreach services, referral services, collaborative and interagency services and programs;
- public relations and marketing, including development of bibliographies and other materials;
- lifelong learning theory, child and young adult development and learning patterns, adult education theory and techniques; and
- rationale, planning, resources and models for child and young adult services and adult services, including popular literature and reader's advisory.

Knowledge for Specialized Library Service to Older Adults

The most specialized area is in library services to older adults. In may cases, providing

services to older adults is a matter of awareness and focus. The basic service, whether collection development, reference, reader's advisory, or program planning, will usually be part of the library's normal core service. If the librarian has not developed an understanding of the need to adapt and focus these services, however, older adult patrons may not receive the level of service to which they are entitled. Without the opportunity to develop a knowledge of the older adult population, many librarians fall prey to the fallacy of the illness model of aging. That is, they equate services to older adults with services to people who are ill or who have disabilities. This may result in a high level of service to the minority of older adult patrons who are ill, homebound or institutionalized while the needs of the majority of older library users are overlooked or neglected. The Library Services to an Aging Population Committee (Reference and Adult Services Division, American Library Association) has developed "Guidelines for Library Service to Older Adults" (Attachment B). To meet the standards outlined in the document, the librarian's specialized knowledge will include:

- demographics and diversity of the older adult population;
- information needs of older adults, families, friends, and caregivers;
- learning abilities and styles of older adults;
- options and resources for provision of library services; community context, including community agencies and others who provide services of interest to older adults; and
- techniques and strategies for adapting materials and services for older adults with disabilities.

Note that American Library Association guidelines require a thorough knowledge of the local

community and its resources in addition to the more universal concepts of library and information science, education, and the older adult population.

Essentially, the library and information science professional must provide information services to a specialized group in a highly political environment. Ideally, the knowledge necessary to provide effective services can be gained through current structures for educating service professionals and disseminating information.

Problems And Knowledge Gaps

There are, unfortunately, weaknesses in the structures of formal education, continuing education, and dissemination mechanisms, as there are gaps in the knowledge base that serves as the foundation for lifelong learning. These are discussed below, together with recommendations for consideration by the National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Problem: Structure and Incentives in Formal Education

The Master of Library and Information Science is the minimum credential for a professional librarian. The course of study for the degree is usually thirty-six hours in length. The programs are offered by Schools of Library and Information Science, or in departments of library and information science usually housed in schools of education, communications, or information studies.

There are significant barriers to beginning professionals obtaining in the thirty-six hour MLIS programthe three tiered level of specialization necessary for most effective service to older adults. The program is relatively short, incentive for specialization is minimal, and opportunities for interdisciplinary study are limited. Although some programs have attempted to expand the

number of hours required, economic conditions mitigate against a longer program. Salaries are not high enough to justify a greater investment in the beginning degree. Nationally, pressures in higher education in general are moving colleges and universities to shorten or restrict the number of hours required for degrees.

Because there is little demand for entry level "older adult" specialists in libraries, students are reluctant to specialize to any significant degree. Information on older adults must be integrated into more general courses and may not receive the attention and frequent updating necessary. With university administrations evaluating programs on numeric measures (cost per student credit hour produced), there may be little incentive for MLIS programs to offer electives that may draw fewer students.

Additionally, there are few mechanisms to encourage the multidisciplinary approach from which older adults and the professionals who provide their educational resources might benefit. It is difficult for students attempting to pursue a well-rounded curriculum in library and information science to fit outside courses into their programs.

Recommendations: Structure and Incentives in Formal Education

- Support current fellowship mechanisms such as HEA Title IIB Library Education and Human Resource Development Program that support specialization in services to older adults. Consider giving preference to proposals that offer an interdisciplinary curriculum, internships with a variety of community agencies that provide educational services to older adults, or supporting dual degrees.
- Support the formation of interdepartmental institutes on aging that emphasize not only interdisciplinary research among faculty, but innovative and interdisciplinary curricula

for students.

Problem: Mechanisms for Continuing Education

While librarians may recognize the need for knowledge about the older adult community, continuing education opportunities are often scattered and piecemeal.

Recommendations: Mechanisms for Continuing Education

- Support a sabbatical program similar to those offered to school teachers to public librarians.
- Support institutes such as those funded by the HEA Title IIB Library Education and Human Resource Development Program to support specialization in educational services to older adults. Give priority to proposals that bring together local practitioners from various professions as participants and speakers and scholars and researchers from different disciplines as speakers and facilitators.
- Create a speakers bureau or training module on lifelong learning and aging and make speakers and training materials available at low cost to local groups through state libraries, schools of library and information science, or state councils on aging, or through national and state professional organizations.

Problem: Literature and Dissemination of Information

Literature about research and applications in the area of learning opportunities for older adults is not easily accessible. It tends to be scattered among disciplines, indexing terms and key words may vary, and the research literature of one discipline may be too technical for professionals of another. Some of the literature is available only in report form, proceedings, or other formats that are not readily available due to lack of indexing or production limitations.

While older adults and those who work with them in their learning projects may find meaningful information in popular periodicals, professional journals, electronic resources, and in reports and brochures from a number of different organizations, finding information directly relevant to services for older learners may largely be a matter of serendipity.

Recommendations: Literature and Dissemination of Information

- Support research on effective strategies for information retrieval of topics with multidisciplinary aspects.
- Establish and support an information clearinghouse on aging. Scan literature in a variety of disciplines on a regular basis. Provide print and electronic newsletters or abstracting service at a modest cost to library and information centers. Use public libraries as depositories for print information and access points for electronic resources.
- Work with other government agencies to make information pertinent to older adult services available, both intellectually, bibliographically, and physically, to older adults and service providers.

Problem: Duplication of Effort

In some communities, because service providers may lack awareness of existing research and models or the efforts of other organizations within the community, programs are continuously reinvented. At least two state libraries have developed manuals for providing services to older adults, although there exists an excellent LSCA (Library Services and Construction Act) funded manual developed for the State Library of California (Rubin and McGovern, 1988). This duplication of effort absorbs time, effort, and resources.

Recommendations: Duplication of Effort

- Support programs of other governmental and quasi-governmental agencies, such as the National Council on Aging and the National Endowment for the Humanities that develop educational programs that are offered in selected public libraries nationwide, often in cooperation with other area agencies. Expand these programs beyond the selected sites by supporting development of program modules and materials that are widely available at low cost.
- Provide grants to local libraries to purchase educational materials geared to older adult learners. Items such as Bi-Folkal Kits, designed for reminiscence programming with older adults, can be adapted to serve audiences with very diverse skills, educational levels, and educational goals, but can be expensive if each senior center, nursing home, retirement community and library attempts to purchase them. Criteria for grants should include effectiveness of plans for using kits, cooperative programming, and circulation of kits to community agencies.

Problem: Competition for Resources

Frequently, although librarians intuitively feel the "rightness" of service to older learners, they lack empirical evidence of the tangible benefits of their services. They may thus have difficulty in justifying cost of services to funding bodies, establishing older adult services as a priority within the library, setting goals and evaluating services, or even explaining to older adults, family members, or caregivers the value of their participation.

Recommendations: Competition for Resources

- Synthesize statistics, research findings, evidence of impact in a factsheet for use by older

adults, agency administrators, and other advocates of lifelong learning opportunities.

- Develop a national public awareness campaign on lifelong learning - for everyone.
- Ensure that public libraries and relevant community agencies are included as providers in all education legislation.
- Develop a research agenda as a first step. Disseminate not only the agenda and requests for proposals, but establish a mechanism (newsletter, abstract, bibliography) for informing service professionals of results. Scan research agendas of other agencies for overlap and possibilities for cooperative efforts or opportunities to compare and synthesize findings. Report research relevant to the OERI agenda whether or not the research has been supported or produced by the office.

Suggested Areas of Research

The suggestions made for areas of research and recommendations to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement are developed to enhance lifelong learning opportunities for older adults. They are designed with several constituencies in mind: older adults and their friends and families, so that they may be informed decision makers; professionals in the area of older adult services, so that they may provide more effective services; and administrators, so they may be more powerful advocates. These areas of research may be divided into three sections: information for advocacy; structures and mechanisms for education and knowledge dissemination to service providers; specific strategies and methods for planning and providing educational services to older learners.

Research: Advocacy

Educational opportunities for older adults often receive lower priority than those for other

learners. This is perhaps a symptom of the stereotypical thinking that considers older adults passive recipients of services who are biding time until death. Until the impact of the older adult population on society in general is made clear, providing services for older learners will continue to be viewed as a humanitarian act to be undertaken when there are "extra" resources available. Suggested topics for research are listed.

- *Economic impact of older adults and services to older adults*. The most common statistic we hear is that two of every five dollars spent by the federal government are spent on behalf of older adults, not a figure designed to underscore the contribution of older adults to the economy. Research is needed on the impact of older adult consumers, many of whom have more discretionary income than at any other time in their lives. A current trend appears to be attracting retirees to communities. What is the economic impact? What services help to attract older adults to an area? More emphasis should be placed on the productivity of older adults. What is the economic value of contributions of older adult workers, both paid and volunteer? Older adults are not always recipients of care. How many older adults act as caregivers to others - whether aged parents, friends or spouses, or grandchildren - and what is the value of these services?
- *Physical impact of lifelong learning opportunities for older adults; secondary effects on families, caregivers, and service providers.* Preliminary research indicates that leisure reading and continued learning may have a significant physical effect (Nell, 1988). These general health studies should be extended. More recently, studies suggest that intellectual activity may result in an actual physical regeneration of brain tissue. If these physical effects can be verified, what is the impact on older adults and their abilities, on

the need for long term medical care, and on well-being and productivity of families and caregivers?

- *Cognitive impact of lifelong learning opportunities for older adults; secondary effects on families, caregivers, and service providers.* Do learning activities enhance and extend cognitive abilities? What type of activities are most effective? Does enhanced ability extend to all types of reasoning and activity - everyday functioning and decision-making as well as performance on similar activities? What are the implications for independent living and productivity, and what is the impact on those associated with older adults?
- *Social/psychological impact of lifelong learning opportunities for older adults; secondary effects on families, caregivers, and service providers.* There is some evidence that participation in lifelong learning activities creates a sense of well-being and control. Extended studies should explore the psychological effects of a pattern of lifelong learning activity. Do those who engage in such activities seem more or less anxious, more or less integrated, more or less independent? Do they engage in more or fewer hobbies, social activities, work or volunteer activities? What is the impact on the people with whom they work and interact?

Research: Structures and Mechanisms for Education and Knowledge Dissemination to Service Providers

Education and training of service professionals will have a substantial impact on the quality of learning opportunities afforded to older adults. Dissemination of knowledge on a continuous basis will improve services as providers update skills and use existing research to establish a research/practice heuristic. The following areas should be addressed.

- *Effectiveness of different models of professional education, both formal academic programs and continuing education programs.* As indicated above, the quality of educational opportunities for older learners is dependent on the expertise and commitment of service professionals who are charged with the responsibility for planning and implementing programs. Evaluation of formal and continuing education programs will assist the Office in developing criteria for proposals for support and extend the benefit by providing planning information for professional educators.
- *Models for organizing and disseminating mulit-disciplinary information to diverse groups, including older adults, families, caregivers, and an array of service providers.* A great deal of valuable information exists but much of it is inaccessible to scholars, researchers, service professionals, and older adults who might benefit from it. The need for effective use of research money argues for developing, organizing, and disseminating existing information as a foundation for program development as well as a springboard for new research.

Research: Strategies and Methods for Planning and Providing Educational Services to Older Learners

Planners must be provided results of research that can be applied in a practical manner to provide direct service. Such information is essential for goal setting and evaluation as well as for strengthening commitment to quality service. These research areas might include:

- *Effects of various media on physical, cognitive, social, and psychological development in older adults.* Do different media affect adult learners in different ways? Do they encourage adults to be more receptive or more expressive, more passive or more active?

Are the media that seem to be most effect the ones that older learners prefer? Although there is some preliminary research on older adult learners and various media, much of it is older and application of the findings to the changing older adult population and the new media environment is questionable. What are the implications of these findings for producers and publishers and for librarians and other education providers?

- *Level and duration of programs necessary to have an impact on development in older adults.* Given that some research indicates positive and dramatic results from participation in learning activities, is there a minimal level and duration of services necessary to produce these effects? The number and frequency of meetings in a given program series appears to be based primarily on rule of thumb and convenience. Knowing what to expect can help older adults and planners set goals and plan effectively.
- *Effectiveness of delivery mechanisms and strategies.* There are a variety of formats for providing educational opportunities for adult learners. As noted, libraries offer a full range of services, from providing collections for self-planned, independent learning to referral to formal education agencies to program series. Program formats vary from one time presentations to long-running weekly series. Some involve a presentation, some are based on interactive discussion, and some revolve around activities. Programs may be self-contained or require outside preparation on the part of the learner. Are some of these formats more effective than others? Does the very act of choice among these have a positive impact? In many cases, the decision may be whether to take the program to residents of retirement complexes or nursing homes or to bring residents to the library. Some research in early childhood education indicates that children receive the greatest

benefit by traveling from school to in-library programs. The change of venue somehow enhances and reinforces the learning experience. Might we see these effects with other age populations as well?

- *Models for effective collaborative or single agency services to older adults.* There is a vast amount of experience and expertise in developing collaborative programs, yet many local service providers are unaware of the activities of others. Consequently, they may duplicate efforts in developing programs, may not offer a full range of programs, and may give up a valuable argument for obtaining resources for programming. For instance, the Ascension Parish (Louisiana) Public Library provides an activity sheet, such as word match or crossword puzzle in large print, that is delivered by Meals on Wheels couriers. A simple and effective project, it was not introduced until instituted by a new librarian with previous experience at another library. A report that describes successful models and analyzes the conceptual and practical reasons for success would be invaluable.

- *Relative advantages and disadvantages of intergenerational programming.* Intergenerational programming is a topic of much debate in public libraries. For all of the arguments on the benefits of integrating different age groups and encouraging interaction, there are counterarguments (sometimes from patrons themselves) who dislike being around children or who do not enjoy discussion sessions with middle aged adults, or who simply prefer opportunities to be with others their own age. Some see the pairing of older adults and children as perpetuating the sterotyping of the aging as entering a second childhood. Are there distinct advantages of one approach over the

other? Should they coexist, offering the widest scope of choice to accommodate individual choice?

- *Use of older adult materials; impact on cost effectiveness of service provision.* Providing materials focused on the needs of older adults or formats designed to accommodate older adults with some measure of disability may sometimes be perceived as expensive services in public libraries. An analysis of use of these materials, taking into account use by other age groups, will give truer cost/benefit picture and enhance services for all patrons. For instance, large print books may be used by people with visual impairments regardless of age. They may also be used by new readers. Some readers find large print books a faster read because they scan very easily. Some materials designed specifically for older adults can be used for other age groups as well, as a World War II reminiscence kit may be used to give secondary school students a better idea of the culture and issues of the time.

Conclusion

This paper has presented an overview of the public library, an agency with a tradition of linking lifelong learners and educational resources, and offered perceptions of barriers to effective service, together with recommendations for addressing specific problems and knowledge gaps. Whatever research topics and recommendations are accepted as a result of this conference, studying and planning lifelong learning opportunities will benefit by incorporating the following basic approaches.

- The approach to research and education should be *multidisicplinary*, viewing the learner in a holistic manner and taking into account physical, psychological, sociological, emotional,

economic, and political impacts and their interactions as well as educational goals. This should be reflected in interagency involvement in planning and providing community- based education for lifelong learners.

- The approach should stress *continuity*, recognizing that aging and development are processes that take place throughout the lifespan. Not only do those individuals classified as older adults continue to change and develop, the patterns of learning and changing have been established much earlier. Additionally, the move into the older adult population is not a radical new phase, but is fluid and continuous.

- The approach should underscore *interrelatedness* of all segments of the community. Perceptions of older adults may well affect not only older adults, their families and friends, and caregivers (the entire spectrum of those in the older adult community), but self-perception, worldview, and actions of children and other adults.

- The approach should be *inclusive*. There is great diversity within the older adult population, and programs and services should be planned with attention to all segments. Agencies that focus only on services for nursing home residents or older adults with disabilities will neglect the 95% of older adults who live independently. Research findings should be synthesized and applied and service models should be developed with flexibility and creativity.

- The approach should emphasize *access to information* and findings. A great deal of relevant information is not readily accessible, either directly to older adults or to service professionals. The approach should provide the dual focus of making available what is known and discovering new knowledge.

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EXPECTATIONS FOR ENTRY LEVEL PUBLIC LIBRARIANS

Public Library Assocation
Education of Public Librarians Committee
January 1995

INTRODUCTION

This statement of *Expectations for Entry Level Public Librarians* is the response of the Public Library Association to the Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library & Information Studies 1992, which require that the program objectives of an accredited master's program educating future information professionals include "appropriate principles of specialization identified in applicable policy statements and documents of relevant professional organizations." The curriculum of the program, if it includes "study of services and activities in specialized fields," must take "into account the statements of knowledge and competencies developed by relevant professional organizations."[1]

The development of this statement was undertaken at the 1992 ALA Midwinter Meeting by the PLA Education of Public Librarians Committee. Work began with examination by the Committee of similar documents from ALA units and other professional associations as well as related articles discussing what entry level public librarians should know and documents from public libraries that dealt with the topic. Following several rounds of revisions of the statement, a draft was presented to the association's constituencies for discussion and suggestions at the 1994 PLA National Conference and in the March/April 1994 issue of *Public Libraries* (pp. 81-91). Final revisions were made to the draft at the 1994 ALA Annual Conference, and it was submitted to the PLA Board for approval at the 1995 ALA Midwinter Meeting.

The statement is addressed to three audiences:

- **the entry-level librarian**, to whom the statement communicates the expectations of the individual public library regarding knowledge, skills, and abilities for entry-level positions.
- **library and information studies (LIS) education,** for which the statement suggests curriculum implications for the graduate LIS programs.
- **public library management**, to whom the statement conveys the implications for staff development, i.e., what the entry level librarian should be able to expect in the way of professional development.

The purpose of the statement is to offer assistance to LIS schools as they review and revise their curricula for the preparation of public librarians, to suggest to currently enrolled students what they will need to know in their first position, and to encourage public libraries to provide for the continued development and growth of new entrants to the field. The categories used in the document are not intended to be interpreted as discrete elements but as integral parts of a whole.

For continued utility, the statement will need regular review and revision by the appropriate PLA unit and ongoing dialogue with the three audiences to whom the statement is addressed.

[1]American Library Association, Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library & Information Studies (Chicago: American Library Association Office for Accreditation, 1992), pp. 9, 12.

ENTRY LEVEL PUBLIC LIBRARIAN KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES	IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES EDUCATION	LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1. Foundations and basic understandings		
a. Knowledge of and ability to interact with the library's community. Knowledge of the legal, structural, and regulatory environment of the public library.	*a.(1a)* Study of community structures; study of local, state, and federal structures and regulations and interfaces applicable to public library, e.g. state library law, LSCA, ADA. *a.(1b)* Study of the development, implementation, and evaluation of public policy mechanisms.	*a.(2a)* Furnish information on the profile of the specific community served, as well as an in-depth orientation to the specific community and knowledge of ways in which library relates to the community. Give information on the library's programs related to LSCA.
b. Knowledge of the mission and roles of the public library and how they differ from the various missions and roles applicable to other kinds of libraries.	*b.(1a)* Study of public libraries in terms of communities served, urban, suburban, and rural, industrial, educational and residential, area and size, particularly in the context of a library system. *b.(1b)* Study of the uniqueness of the mission of public libraries, taught by professors with substantial ongoing interaction with public libraries.	*b.(2a)* Provide structural orientation to the entire library system, its mission and role, and the appropriate policies and procedures, rules and regulations.
c. Understanding of the extensive public contact required in public library service.	*c.(1a)* Opportunities for practica that put student in contact with public library clientele.	*c.(2a)* Facilitate direct exposure to the public as early as feasible in new public librarian's career.
d. Ability to serve at appropriate levels the culturally diverse clientele of the public, including understanding of this clientele and a commitment to serve all people.	*d.(1a)* Emphasis on the degree to which responsibilities in public libraries are determined by community needs and wants, as established through community interaction. *d.(1b)* Identification and understanding of multiculturalism. *d.(1c)* Development of, commitment to and expertise in providing information and resources that reflect the diversity of human experiences and promote understanding of all people.	*d.(2a)* Provide a variety of experiences in serving the various clientele of the library. *d.(2b)* Give opportunity to further develop cultural sensitivity toward and knowledge of the clientele served. *d.(2c)* Allow time and opportunity to further develop familiarity with the specific resources needed to serve the diverse clientele, such as community information resource files.

2. Organization of knowledge		
a. Kno vledge of how all types of materials are selected and acquired.	*a.(1a)* Study of the information industry, distribution of all types and formats of materials, function of vendors, libraries' selection and acquisition process.	*a.(2a)* Inculcate personnel in the library's selection and acquisition policies and mechanisms.
b. Comprehension of how all types of materials are organized in the library to facilitate access and use.	*b.(1a)* Instruction in principles of cataloging and classification and indexing.	*b.(2a)* Orient librarians to the specific systems and procedures within the library by which materials are organized and accessed.
3. Information resources development and management		
a. Ability to identify the appropriate review media for selecting materials for assigned area of responsibility.	*a.(1a)* Inclusion of an overview of the variety of review media available for materials pertinent to the wide range of community and lifestyle-interests.	*b.(2a)* Provide wide-ranging review media, other sources of information appropriate to the library's community, and knowledge of how review media are used locally to build collections.
b. Abilty to use various literatures in a variety of disciplines and formats.	*b.(1a)* Appropriate admission requirements that will ensure basic grounding in a variety of disciplinary areas. *b.(1b)* Adequate guidance in degree program development that recognizes the need to be conversant in the information behavior/communication systems in the various disciplines.	*b.(2a)* Offer opportunity to work with differing types of materials and disciplines. *b.(2b)* Allow for ongoing opportunity to expand knowledge/keep current in various types of resources.
c. Ability to use review media, participate in selection of materials and information access, weeding and upkeep.	*c.(1a)* Study of the criteria of selection and the principles of collection development, management, and maintenance.	*c.(2a)* Furnish opportunity to participate in selection and to serve on selection committees. Provide opportunity to review new books and other media where needed.
d. Capacity to develop and maintain community information resource files.	*d.(1a)* Inclusion of community information concepts and practices as components in the curriculum.	*d.(2a)* Give thorough orientation to local community information resource files and experience in information gathering and outreach.
4. User services and programming		
a. Understanding of the role of services and programming as a mechanism for the delivery of information.	*a.(1a)* Introduction of students to the types of services and programming in public libraries.	*a.(2a)* Instruct new librarians in the library's services and programming, types and scheduling, and the structure through which coordination is effected. *a.(2b)* Foster early exposure to programming public and information services.

b. Ability to design and implement programs and services for specified clientele.	*b.(1a)* Study of different clienteles served by public libraries as well as the types of services most appropriate for those clienteles. Opportunity to design specific programs or services.	*b.(2a)* Provide a variety of experiences in services and programming, training and guidance including mentoring and workshops.
c. Understanding of marketing and the ability to design and implement a public relations program.	*c.(1a)* Analysis of philosophy and techniques of marketing and public relations within the context of library and information services offered by public libraries.	*c.(2a)* Offer continuing education and experience in marketing and public relations.
d. Ability to use current models of reference service.	*d.(1a)* Study of the nature of quality control for all types of libraries, including models for services within libraries. *d.(1b)* Provision of knowledge of planning processes developed for public libraries at the national and state levels.	*d.(2a)* Insure early exposure to the planning processes utilized in public libraries.
e. Capability to define what the client is seeking and to retrieve information pertinent to the client's needs in a timely fashion.	*e.(1a)* Provision of understanding of the dynamics of the reference and reader's advisory interchanges. *e.(1b)* Development of understanding of the different ways people seek information in a library.	*e.(2a)* Implement mentoring program to refine ability to provide information to clients. *e.(2b)* Train new librarians in a variety of assessment techniques that measure success in satisfying client needs.
f. Ability to find, retrieve, use, and make available to clients information in whatever format needed, wherever located, in all communication channels, including knowledge of and ability to use computer-based information resources.	*f.(1a)* Examination of communication theory, information storage and retrieval models, and commonly used print and non-print media. *f.(1b)* Provision of opportunity to have adequate knowledge of frequently used computer-based information resources, including hands-on experience.	*f.(2a)* Provide orientation to the resources used by the specific library to answer clients' information needs. *f.(2b)* Develop competency with library held, computer-based information resources.
5. Technology		
a. Basic understanding of terminology and concepts of information transfer technology and ability to continue development of learning in this area.	*a.(1a)* Affording of opportunities to interact with a wide range of applicable technologies.	*a.(2a)* Enhance learning opportunities in the area of information transfer technology both within the library through on-the-job training and outside the library through attendance at conferences and workshops.
b. Knowledge of electronic networks and networking.	*b.(1a)* Study of network models; use of illustrative ones, such as Internet.	*b.(2a)* Train new librarians in electronic networks used and the uses to which they are put.

c. Knowledge of computer applications in the public library environment.	*c.(1a)* Updating of curriculum to keep it abreast of current changes in technology applicable to meeting information needs.	*c.(2a)* Incorporate learning opportunities for librarians to become familiar with existing resources, as well as new technology and technical applications as they are adopted.
6. Administration and management		
a. Understanding of the processes by which public libraries and governed and funded.	*a.(1a)* Study of the organization and governance of public libraries.	*a.(2a)* Furnish orientation in the specific governmental organization under which a given public library operates.
b. Ability to work with others in a team approach. Ability to work alone or in teams.	*b.(1a)* Use of a variety of learning methodologies, including team experience.	*b.(2a)* Provide membership on committees. *b.(2b)* Stress the principle of a team approach to problem solving within the library environment and recognize the value of individual contributions. *b.(2c)* Contribute positive feedback on a regular basis.
c. Ability to apply management principles.	*c.(1a)* Incorporation of general principles of management and personnel administration in the curriculum.	*c.(2a)* Groom staff for management as appropriate; involve all staff in planning.
d. Awareness of fiscal implications of decisions taken.	*d.(1a)* Instruction in principles of financial management.	*d.(2a)* Supervise employees in costing functions they perform; orient to budget preparation.
7. Planning and evaluation		
a. Ability to articulate and identify problems.	*a.(1a)* Adherence to critical approach to learning.	*a.(2a)* Encourage supervisors to challenge new employees to identify and articulate problems. *a.(2b)* Reward thoughtful questioning of practice; explain why things are done.
b. Ability to use appropriate techniques and methodologies for identifying needs, problem solving, planning, and evaluating services.	*b.(1a)* Introduction to principles of planning, evaluation, and research, including community analysis.	*b.(2a)* Allow time and opportunities to be involved in planning and evaluation procedures within the library. *b.(2b)* Afford time and opportunities to review the literature as relates to the job.
c. Skill in collecting and analyzing data for decision making.	*c.(1a)* Basic grounding in analytical methodologies.	*c.(2a)* Urge new employees to offer factual basis for recommendations, to gather and interpret data on the job.

8. Professional and ethical responsibilities		
a. Professional development; self-assessment of professional expertise and conduct, current awareness of trends.	*a.(1a)* Highlighting of current trends. Defining and discussion of profession\professionalism.	*a.(2a)* Develop an interactive performance plan. *a.(2b)* Encourage development of a personal plan for professional growth.
b. Commitment to and understanding of principles of intellectual freedom.	*b.(1a)* Introduction to a variety of documents, policies, and procedures that support intellectual freedom. *b.(1b)* Grounding in intellectual freedom issues and the complexities of decisions in this area in a culturally diverse and technological society.	*b.(2a)* Prepare to back librarians in an intellectual freedom fight, with policies and procedures in place; provide orientation to these policies and procedures.
c. Highly developed sense of professionalism and ethical conduct.	*c.(1a)* Attention to the development of ethical behavior, including the electronic environment. Study of professional codes of ethics and surrounding discussions.	*c.(2a)* Furnish orientation and training in policies and procedures of the specific library as related to ethical conduct. *f.(2b)* Provide a forum for discussion of these issues.
d. Ongoing commitment to continuing education and participation in professional development activities.	*d.(1a)* Provision of CE opportunities.	*d.(2a)* Support staff attendance at CE programs. *d.(2b)* Provide means for the attendee to share CE learning in the workplace.
e. Commitment to participation in professional organizations.	*e.(1a)* Introduction to professional organizations and discussion of their role in professional growth.	*e.(2a)* Support staff attendance at professional meetings and recognize involvement.

Guidelines for Library Service to Older Adults

Prepared by the Library Services to an Aging Population Committee, Reference and Adult Services Division, American Library Association. Adopted by the Reference and Adult Services Division Board of Directors, January 1987. (Supersedes "Guidelines for Library Services to an Aging Population," July 1975)

INTRODUCTION

The importance of library services to meet the particular needs of older adults increases along with this group's numbers. These guidelines suggest means whereby librarians can meet those needs.

1. Exhibit and promote a positive attitude toward the aging process and older adults.

1.1 Actively seek to improve communication skills with people of all ages.

1.2 Educate its administrators, librarians, and library staff regarding physiological, psychological, social, and cultural development of people throughout the lifespan.

1.3 Participate in continuing education which will enhance skills in working with older adults.

1.4 Avoid labeling and look beyond the stereotypes and mythologies of aging.

1.5 Exhibit the same level of interest, comfort, and respect with older adults as with any other patrons.

2. Promote information and resources on aging and its implications not only to older adults themselves but also to family members, professionals in the field of aging, and other persons interested in the aging process.

2.1 Assess the information needs of the older population in order to build a collection which meets the real needs of:
- a. people interested in understanding the aging process;
- b. people planning for a change in lifestyle or employment;
- c. individuals who act as advocates for the aging;
- d. service providers; and
- e. younger people learning about the potential for growth over the lifespan.

2.2 Assure that library selection and weeding policies lead to the acquisition of current and useful materials which reflect diverse formats and information needs. Collection development should include information on:
- a. lifelong learning;
- b. older adults as consumers of aging services;
- c. behavioral implications;
- d. cultural, ethnic, economic, and regional differences;
- e. leisure time activities; and
- f. issues raised by the rapid aging of our society

2.3 Locate sources of appropriate materials including large print books, pamphlets, and audiovisual materials (e.g., talking books, tapes, films, videotapes, etc.) which are available for purchase, for loan, or at no cost.

2.4 Survey the existing gerontological resources within the community and make available the materials or information about them.

2.5 Organize information on community agencies, activities, and resources for use by older adults and those who work with them.

2.6 Provide ready access to an information and referral service which includes current information on:
- a. human services agencies serving older adults;
- b. speakers, reviewers, and other resource people available for programming; and
- c. publications, reports, community population profiles, funding agencies, and other research sources.

2.7 Publicize the availability of resources by:
- a. providing reading lists, advertisements, and exhibits of interest to the publics identified above;
- b. introducing the materials, demonstrating their use or co-sponsoring with other agencies and organizations, discussion series and programs at the library or in the community;
- c. mailing informative brochures to club presidents, committee chairpersons, interested individuals, and concerned agencies and organizations; and
- d. attending meetings, giving presentations, and working actively towards community involvement.

3. Assure services for older adults which reflect cultural, ethnic and economic differences.

3.1 Become knowledgeable about the cultural, ethnic, and economic composition of the community.

3.2 Use this information to purchase materials and arrange service, to train staff, to conduct programs, and to develop and maintain interagency cooperation.

3.3 Actively participate with existing agencies to serve the literacy needs of the older population.

4. Provide library service appropriate to the special needs of all older adults, including the minority who are geographically isolated, homebound, institutionalized, or disabled.

4.1 Provide trained staff to serve older adults.

4.2 Provide special materials such as talking books or large print books and periodicals.

4.3 Provide special equipment such as tape recorders, magnifying devices, page turners, reading machines, etc., to help in the reading process.

4.4 Identify the homebound or institutionalized who are in need of library service.

4.5 Provide personalized library service to meet the special needs of the individual within the institution (i.e., bed-to-bed, etc.) or the home.

4.6 Cooperate with the institutional administration in the planning and implementation of library services for the institutionalized.

4.7 Provide on-site service to the homebound and institutionalized, with training and transportation provided by the library.

5. Utilize the potential of older adults (paid or volunteer) as liaisons to reach their peers and as a resource in intergenerational programming.

5.1 Develop and implement well-organized training sessions for the individuals carrying out the library program.

5.2 Invite staff (including volunteers) to participate in library staff meetings so that they can be kept current about resources and policies.

5.3 Work closely with staff to solicit ideas, ensure a meaningful work experience, and provide as much autonomy as is desirable.

6. Employ older adults at both professional and support levels for either general library work or for programs specifically targeted to older adults.

6.1 Make certain that older adults are given serious consideration as candidates for either professional or support staff positions as available.

6.2 Request volunteer help only when funding is not available for paid positions.

7. Involve older adults in the planning and design of library services and programs for the entire community and for older adults in particular.

7.1 Identify representative older adults in the community to participate in library planning.

7.2 Assure that adequate needs assessment is conducted to represent the needs and interests of the older adults of the community.

7.3 Actively plan and implement programming to meet the needs identified.

8. Promote and develop working relationships with other agencies and groups connected with the needs of older adults.

8.1 Identify agencies, organizations, and groups in the community which are interested in older adults. Confer with agency leadership about ways in which the library can contribute to the achievement of their goals and objectives through:
- a. providing resources, materials, and services for older adults and for professional and lay workers in the field;
- b. cooperating in programming, service delivery, and in-service training; and
- c. involving key persons in cooperative library and interagency planning.

8.2 Identify organizations of older adults in the community and involve them in the planning and delivery of services.

8.3 Enlist participation of area librarians in developing cooperative collection development, and in developing services, programs, continuing education and staff training to improve library service to older adults.

8.4 Work toward comprehensive cooperative planning for older adults by:
- a. working with educational institutions to promote lifelong learning opportunities for older adults;
- b. locating and working with pre-retirement groups sponsored by business, industry, and other agencies;

coordinating with other agencies to eliminate unnecessary duplication of services;

d. making available a list of community resources for information and referral which would then be available to older adults and the agencies which serve them; and

e. asking that professional staff and administration keep abreast of current developments in gerontology and geriatrics regionally and nationally so that informed interagency communication can be facilitated.

9. Provide programs, services, and information for those preparing for retirement or later-life career alternatives.

9.1 Develop a collection of materials and information on pre-retirement planning, retirement, and career alternatives, and provide bibliographies on these topics.

9.2 Cooperate with other community agencies to provide workshops, programs, and seminars on such topics as pre-retirement planning, retirement, and career alternatives.

9.3 Serve as a clearinghouse for information on retirement, alternate employment, and other career opportunities.

10. Facilitate library use by older persons through improved library design and access to transportation.

10.1 Make sure that both the collection and meeting rooms are physically accessible to older adults, with special regard for the impaired elderly, by providing as necessary ramps, hand bars, and other design features.

10.2 Provide or be knowledgeable about the availability of assistive devices such as audio loops, infrared listening systems, etc.

10.3 Provide furniture for use with wheelchairs.

10.4 Strategically locate large-print signage, including informational and safety guides.

10.5 Inform or assist older adults in securing transportation by utilizing public or volunteer transportation, new or existing van services, or dial-a-ride systems

10.6 Seek and secure funding for any of the above.

11. Incorporate as part of the library's planning and evaluation process the changing needs of an aging population.

11.1 Conduct periodic needs assessments to determine whether library resources and programs are satisfying the changing needs of older adults.

11.2 Use the results of the needs assessments and continuing evaluation of current programs and services to assist with planning.

12. Aggressively seek sources of funding, and commit a portion of the library budget to programs and services for older adults.

12.1 Use these funds to acquire resources, assign or recruit staff, promote services, conduct staff development, and forge inter-agency cooperation.

12.2 Pursue sources of additional funds in order to provide for special or one-time-only projects. ■■

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Reference tools for librarians, such as directories, bibliographies, statistical tables, and handbooks, and working tools for social gerontologists and students, such as manuals, outlines, and guides, are included in this annotated bibliography of books, pamphlets, and journal articles. The classified arrangement follows that of the National Council on Aging Library's verticle file, and indexing is by name and subject.

Casey, Genevieve M. *Library Services for the Aging*. Hamden, Conn.: Library Professional Publications, 1984.

Discussions of U.S. demographics, the intellectual abilities of the elderly, and educational opportunities for senior citizens lead into chapters on current trends in library services for the elderly, information resources for both the aging and researchers in the field of aging, and the professional education of librarians. A chapter on program planning for public librarians and an annotated bibliography of library service to the aging round out this work.

Monroe, Margaret E., and Rhea Joyce Rubin. *The Challenge of Aging: A Bibliography*. Littleton, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1983.

Nontechnical works, including creative literature, comprise this fully annotated list on aging. Organized according to an outline of "life-tasks" and indexed by author-title and subject, it is intended for individual readers, librarians serving them, social gerontologists working with groups, and senior-center activities directors. Materials available in nonprint format are noted.

Turock, Betty J. *Serving the Older Adult: A Guide to Library Programs and Information Sources*. New York: Bowker, 1982.

Various types of service programs and delivery systems are explored in this practical work. Also covered are a history of relevant legislation; demographics; theories of aging, program planning, and management; and the all-important funding issues. A valuable reference/collection development section offers an annotated core collection on aging; lists of fiction and nonfiction works, periodicals, and films about aging; and a selective directory of organizations and associations involved in the aging network.

THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM: A FACILITATOR of ACCESS for COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

Submitted To

National Institute on Post Secondary Education,
Libraries, and Lifelong Learning
(NIPELL)
Department of Education

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THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM: A FACILITATOR of ACCESS for COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

> The information revolution challenges the way we school the population--youngsters and adults alike. It challenges what people need to learn, when, and how; it offers up new ways to learn as well as new ways to educate; and it empowers new people and new institutions to be interested in doing some of the education work long expected only of formal institutions such as schools and colleges.
>
> Mecklenburger, 1994

Situation Statement

Joel Barker (1992), in his book FUTURE EDGE, suggests that there are three keys to the future for any organization that wants to participate in the 21st century--excellence, innovation, and anticipation. Excellence is described as the basis of the 21st century, innovation is the way to gain a competitive edge, and anticipation provides the information that allows the

organization to be in the right place at the right time. "Anticipation" further allows the organization to predict customer needs and innovate and produce high quality products or services required.

As educational service providers, we strive to demonstrate excellence and innovation. However, a key factor impacting our ability to be "at the right place at the right time" is the technological future, and the emphasis on a national structure for information access.

Recognizing that we are participants in the Information Age, there is little debate that our world is changing. In the past, our goal has been to distribute information to learners or clients; however, the technological advances of the 20th century set the stage for a key paradigm shift, from distributing information to providing access to information. For example, only weeks ago, for the first time any person with a computer, a modem, and access to the Internet's World Wide Web could contact a space shuttle circling the Earth. That meant 20 million or more computer users could have crowded aboard the shuttle Endeavour. Normally, there is only room for eight people in a shuttle, but the first 11 hours after Endeavour's launch on March 2, 1995, some 20,000 people boarded the orbiter via their

computers. The new service allowed a "virtual reality tour" with an equal opportunity to share the excitement of the exploration.

Today's topic is about change, about paradigm shifts in thought and action, about being catalysts for change in the organizations and institutions in which we work, of doing things differently. It is about the "change drivers" influencing the future, those powerful events such as the maturing of America, the Information Era, economic restructuring, the Mosaic Society, global inter-connectedness. And most important, it is about learning, about the impact of information access on a society that believes in the empowerment of citizens. It is about designing a framework for action that empowers citizens, a framework that is flexible, dynamic, risky, nonhierarchical, inclusive, that honors the individuality of all participants, is future-oriented,...radically different from anything we've ever known.

This framework will provide the platform for the 21st century learner emphasizing shifts in thinking, including a recognition that learning is a lifelong necessity. This framework will depend on strong leadership, on leaders and entrepreneurs who can build and partner collaboratively; it will require flexibility in course and program delivery that is

"customer driven". Increased emphasis will be placed on providing education to the work site and the home.

Let me reiterate; society is moving from an educational dissemination model to one of access based on customer-driven needs. This access must be designed for ease and use of application. This shift represents a move in learning from teacher-centered to learner-centered, and from organization-government- and institutional needs to a focus on community-centered needs. In this context, the learner and community takes greater responsibility for accessing the information and/or education with the role of the teacher/educator moving to one of facilitator and/or broker. As Dr. Chere Gibson (1992) so aptly put it, the teacher/educator moves from "the sage on the stage to a guide on the side".

Another factor impacting the "context" of learning in the 21st century is the expectation that education will begin to be organized around service. For example, technology-enabled learning is about to rise exponentially; it will be the norm in 2001! University boundaries will dissolve with some proposing the classroom paradigm will reverse. Rather than one teacher/guide per 10-20 students, there will be one student per 10-20 experts. Ubiquitous networks and universal access will

make this possible. In addition, we are also talking about "just-in-time learning" and the return of apprenticeships.

Trends Underlying Lifelong Learning in the Technological Future

What are the trends supporting this context of the technological future and the move from distribution to access, and the change in role for the teacher/educator in terms of lifelong learning? Certainly the demographic shifts, economic crises leading to job retraining, societal diversity, changes in our social structure, personal questions of one's worth and self-esteem, and the need for the human interaction and confirmation will impact the learner of the 21st century. For example, part-time students are the fastest growing population in higher education; at the same time, composition of the U.S. civilian labor force will change dramatically by the year 2005, although the number of new entrants will be insufficient for the needs of the economy. More Americans are college-educated while continuing education provides increased economic security for adults as they retrain. Virtually every American home has access to some form of instructional technology, i.e., audio, video, data (Lifelong Learning Trends, 1994).

At the same time, the urbanization of America is increasing as is the access to resources within the urban area. This urban concentration of resources has significant impact on rural America as off-campus learning centers are developed to accommodate the lifelong learning needs of rural areas not linked to urban resources. In addition, state systems are increasing to meet the needs of learners "at a distance" with new approaches in the design and delivery of educational offerings.

Rural America

Rural America is a prime recipient of efforts targeting access and distance education. One-fifth of our population live on 83 percent of our land, what we call rural America. American agriculture makes up over 15 percent of our gross domestic product and generates $1 trillion in economic activity every year One of six working men and women owe their jobs to the food and fiber economy, although 65 million Americans live and work in communities that, on average, are more isolated, have higher poverty rates, and lower income levels than urban communities (Rominger, 1995).

The telecommunications network and access to information will provide lifelong education opportunities and be key factors

in rural America's resiliency. An example of the application of technology to enable rural community access can be noted in the recent participation by Marshall County, Indiana in a project called "Access Indiana." The goal is to make local information from government, libraries, schools, and business available locally in an electronic format. The plans for a community Home Page sponsored by the Marshall County Extension Office will facilitate this connectivity. Increasing numbers of educational service providers share the vision of access to information and education any time and any place, and to a quality education and/or training tailored to their individual learning and workplace needs. Accomplishing this vision requires new environments for lifelong learning that use technology to support new models of learning and teaching. These models extend beyond the traditional school-age population and the confines of classroom walls to include the home and community (e.g., museums, libraries, County Extension Offices, community centers, and the workplace).

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a national model that has been in place over 80 years. CES demonstrates the

cooperation, collaboration, and partnering among/between local community resources. The locus-of-control for community access to information and education is based on shared leadership, resources, and capabilities within the community, with the expected outcome capacity building within the community to improve quality of life. This model represents a publicly funded, nonformal, lifelong educational system designed as a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Land-grant universities, authorized by the Federal Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. State legislation enabled local governments or organized groups in the nation's counties to become the third legal partner in this endeavor.

CES serves as the local link to our nation's vast Land-grant university system. In a practical sense, the System links the education and research resources and activities of 74 land-grant institutions, 3,150 counties, and (USDA). CES includes 32,000 employees and 2.8 million volunteers. The institutions include the Land-grant universities; institutions of the territories (American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Micronesia, Northern Marianas, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands); and Tuskegee University.

The partners in CES are interdependent, yet each has

considerable autonomy in funding, staffing, and programming.

Each component partner performs distinctive functions essential to operation of the total system described as follows:

* Cooperative State Research, Education, & Extension Service: represents the Federal partnership and provides national leadership in arriving at national objectives and priorities in addition to performing administrative, coordination, and accountability functions.

* State Land-Grant Universities: serve as the coordinators of Cooperative Extension in all states working with both the Federal and local partners; state institutions have responsibility for initiation, implementation, and evaluation of programs and for cooperation with the Federal partner in national program development. They are also responsible for securing adequate state and county funding and developing budgets for the expenditure of funds received from all partners.

* Local Partner: ensures that Cooperative Extension remains relevant to local needs and that the priorities set are those that, in fact, best serve the people;

  serve as the link to the university system from the local level in meeting outreach mission of the Land-grant community.

* Private Sector Partners: fully as important are less formal relationships including its volunteers and private funding sources (national foundations, corporations, and individuals).

* Research Partner: Extension educational programs are in large part research-based, including production and applied research.

The System is characterized by two-way communication between those who work for Extension and those who utilize the system,

thus ensuring researchers and educators of an early awareness from the local community of problems and issues of concern. In addition, this 'grass roots' approach provides direction for research and education efforts and speeds the application of research-born information and discovery.

The infrastructure represents a tri-partnership between the Federal government, the state, and the local community, the latter being the focus of today's comments. County Extension Offices are conveniently located for most citizens, usually housed in courthouses, post offices, or other government buildings in the county. A variety of communication technologies (electronic networks/Internet, electronic mail/ bulletin boards, satellite communications, audio conferencing, FAX) link the counties with state and Federal counterparts and provide program delivery mechanisms. Professionals nationwide continue to use these technologies to enable targeted audiences access to information and education more efficiently and effectively.

Strategic Planning

Throughout its history, the Cooperative Extension System has engaged in strategic planning with significant change resulting from these efforts. The most recent effort (1995), Framing the

Future: Strategic Framework for a System of Partnerships, advocates a balance between institutional autonomy and System-wide leadership. It also articulates the Mission, Values, and Vision necessary for the 21st century. The document references environment, leadership, and support enabling Extension to create and respond to opportunities within the community.

The Mission is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships. As a community-based/"grass roots" model, the values of the organization are central to the support of the Mission and Vision of the system, including:

a) Collaboration--optimize resources and enhance program outcomes through partnerships with others outside CES;

b) Credibility--build on individual competence, excellence, integrity, and objectivity;

c) Democracy--believe that people, when given facts they understand, will act not only in their self-interest but also in the interest of society;

d) Diversity--recognize that all people have dignity and worth; CES draws strength from differences;

e) Learner-centered, lifelong education--engage and empower learners through the programs offered;

f) Scholarship--discover, integrate, apply, disseminate, and provide access to knowledge;

g) Self-reliance--encourage learners to take responsibility

for their decisions and actions; and

h) Teamwork--address complex issues by working in teams of individuals contributing our expertise and ideas to create new and different approaches.

The Vision clearly articulates the recognition of CES as the national lifelong educational network of the Land-grant universities. This network depends on the strong, continuing support of local, state, and federal governments. Expected outcomes of the vision are to:

a) connect research and knowledge from all parts of the land-grant universities;

b) provide access to global information in anticipation of and response to emerging issues and critical local needs;

c) form partnerships;

d) establish cooperative ventures with private and public institutions and agencies; and

e) practice scholarship leading to improvement of organization, methods, and outcomes.

Core Program Efforts

The Congressional charge to Cooperative Extension, through the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, as amended, is far ranging and extremely broad. The Act specifies audiences, general subject areas, and educational approaches for this unique public partnership. The System was established as an entity that would modify its programs and outreach in response to such factors as

new knowledge, changes in client needs, and alterations in the socio-economic landscape.

The initial desire to help people help themselves, particularly people in rural areas where educational opportunities were scarce, served as the basis for the Cooperative Extension System. The goal was to transmit/provide access to rural people for Land-grant university and USDA-generated knowledge and experience. In the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 (Public Act 95-113), amended in 1981, Congress set forth a broadened scope for CES programs.

The new law mandated that states and counties retain flexibility for scope of programs and definitions of Extension clientele. In looking at the function of CES in the Land-grant community, Congress committed administrators and faculty to place lifelong learning on a plane equal to that of research and preparatory education.

Extension's Base Programs support the community-based issue concept and represent the major educational efforts that are central to the mission of most Extension organizations. Base Programs are the dynamic, result-oriented educational efforts that receive significant resources throughout the System from national, state, and county partners. These programs can be

thought of as a foundation, and include:

* Agriculture,
* Community Resources and Economic Development,
* Family Development and Resource Management,
* 4-H and Youth Development,
* Leadership and Volunteer Development,
* Natural Resources and Environmental Management, and
* Nutrition, Diet, and Health.

In addition, CES has developed strategic plans for Diversity and for Communications, Technology, and Distance Education. These plans provide leadership and support to the Base Programs and the System's capacity to meet the needs of customers.

Originating from the CES Base Programs are National Initiatives that receive special emphasis for a relatively short time. These initiatives represent the System's commitment to respond to important societal problems of broad national concern. Current National Initiatives include:

* Communities in Economic Transition,
* Decisions for Health,
* Food Safety and Quality,
* Plight of Young Children,
* Sustainable Agriculture,
* Waste Management,
* Water Quality, and
* Youth at Risk.

National level leadership provided additional emphasis to describe a conceptual framework for moving toward Issues Programming in Extension. In contrast to more traditional

program planning. Issues Programming broadens the field in which Extension can work, extending beyond existing audiences and problems and thus creates a more comprehensive source of program priorities. Programs flow in response to issues, develop in the context of wide public concern, and are evaluated according to their impact on people affected by the issues.

CONNECTIVITY and ACCESS

Central to the learner-centered/community-based model is the emphasis on the connection to research and knowledge, and the community capability to "access information globally". Both facets of the model bring attention to the value of a system-wide communications network, supportive of customer access to information and education. Changes in educational programs reflect new partners, new clients and a new way of doing business with more expansion, sharing of resources and less concern with turf. Funding sources require demonstrated partnerships and collaboration and expected impact to the community and nation, not only to the individual. The emphasis on access supports the current efforts nationally by educational service providers, both profit and nonprofit, and by the current Administration's initiative to build a National Information Infrastructure (NII).

The Clinton/Gore administration's emphasis on community-based education and decision-making, and the NII initiative creates new possibilities for extending time, place, and access to resources. Vice President Gore (1994) further enhances this concept by emphasizing the potential for simultaneous exchange of information creating "networked communities". This developing global information infrastructure provides a platform for a variety of connections allowing for distance learning to take place, including:

* Multi-media approach to learning,
* Links with libraries and other community learning sites,
* Universal access,
* Partnerships with private sector,
* Interconnectivity,
* Links between learners and faculty/educators,
* Rural development, and
* Affordability.

Approximately $2 billion has been requested by the administration for high performance computing and advanced networking in the U.S. between 1994 and 1997. Four specific areas targeted for change are: education, health care, digital libraries, and government information (NII, 1993).

Unfortunately, many communities lack the awareness and local talent to exploit the benefits of the information highway

which, in turn, could provide improved health, education and communications. In addition, key targets of the administration in meeting the informational and educational needs of the community include front-line concerns such as 'one-stop' shopping, interactive communications, and total customer service. For many, the only 'on and off ramps' to the NII are the electronic mail terminals in Cooperative Extension offices. The County also provides the opportunity for one-stop shopping and total customer service.

County Extension leadership continues to be a critical factor in education as communities reach out for opportunities. However, critical to that leadership is the continued interface with all Federal, state, and local government information providers, in addition to the community resources such as public libraries. The development of databases, information servers, and group collaboration depends on partnerships among/between the local community resources, not a top-down, hierarchical approach.

Access to Community-Based Learning

Using the NII as a platform for the future, with a focus on education, libraries, health care, and government access, what are the challenges that communities will be confront? Before

identifying those issues, however, one must have an understanding of the dynamics of a community, and the role of education within that community. Minzey's (1979, pg 14) suggests that community education is "a concept; a means of solving identified human problems through an educative process, incorporating many groups and individuals." From this perspective, a community becomes involved and learns to work together in a process-oriented format to identify problems and seek solutions. Overt activities designed to resolve issues identified by process format become program/or product results to be experienced by the community.

CES is one of many community agencies focused on helping communities solve problems through education. For the past 80 years, CES has served as a "people to people"' organization. Although the priority is still the client/learner, the System is moving away from a single format of dissemination to an approach incorporating multiple formats with greater responsibility placed on the learner for implementing what was learned. The focus is on the engagement and active participation of the clientele through varied learning opportunities.

In support of this active participation by the learner, let me share a few examples as CES reaches out to the community and, in turn, provides opportunities for collaboration and

partnerships within the community.

CASE: Columbia, Missouri "Community Information Network" (COIN) serves as national model for rural communities in combining resources (school board, library, city government, CES) to build home, school, farm, business access to latest information; represents model providing free dial-up access to local, national, and international databases. Through National Research Education Network (NREN), some 12,000 online Extension publications can be accessed through the Internet; COIN provides awareness, training, and technical support to expand community/public access.

CASE: Navajo Reservation, Shiprock, New Mexico, serves as community model for education in food safety and nutrition through interactive video program "Walk-in Beauty"; combines Navajo educators and CES in bilingual educational program effort; program delivered to reservation through food distribution center sites and remote tribal houses.

CASE: National Children, Youth, and Family Network, a partnership between CES, CSREES-USDA, and the National 4-H Council consisting of four National Networks focusing on Child Care, Collaborations, Science and Technology, and Family Resiliency, and a national distributed information infrastructure. The mission is to marshal resources of the Land-grant universities and CES to collaborate with other organizations in developing and delivering educational programs that equip limited resource families and youth who are at risk for not meeting basic human needs; each network includes faculty from Land-grant universities; services of the CYF Network are concentrated at 95 CSREES-USDA funded Youth at Risk local projects and are simultaneously available to all states and counties. A variety of compatible computer information management systems (NAL CYFERNET, Univ of MN Child, Youth and Families Consortium

Electronic Clearinghouse, NC Region QUERRI, Ohio State's PINNET) are included in the initial infrastructure linked via the Internet. Each Network will identify sources of information in its focus area compatible with the needs of communities and facilitate collaborations between those sources and faculty in Extension.

CASE: Monroe County, Georgia, demonstrates community access in the home through the concept of the "Answer Shop", a video information center modeled after the video rental concept; target audience is the limited resource clientele of the community; residents are offered opportunities to become members, and check-out and take home educational video tapes representative of family issues, environment and other areas, to be used at the leisure of the clientele.

CASE: University of Kentucky, "Gee Whiz in Agriculture"; cooperative effort between elementary schools, libraries, and university to enhance and clarify image of Agriculture as a business and mainstay industry of this country; offered via satellite television series to fourth and fifth grade classrooms statewide and nationally. Illustrates that Agriculture is complex, scientific industry involving variety of careers and covers six major areas including insects beef and dairy, fish, hydroponic lettuce production, forestry, and horses; 30 information segments at 15 minutes each are offered with time for question and answers with scientists; offered in 40 states and Canada, with 200 sets of tapes purchased and requests by PBS for rebroadcast.

CASE: Clemson University Online Disaster Assistance provides information on 100 disaster assistance topics via ES-USDA Almanac server and four Land-grant universities; project result of 1989 disaster assistance during Hurricane Hugo by Clemson via Fact Sheets; with advent of Hurricane Andrew in 1992, disaster emergency information

prepared for online community access before Andrew hit with Florida residents having preventive information prior to disaster. Other information accessed during floods in Midwest, drought in Southeast, earthquakes in California, and recent flooding in Georgia.

CASE: Mississippi Community College and Extension Network enables CES specialists to conduct timely workshops that reach multiple audiences simultaneously, communicate interactively using video and audio links at 18 sites. In addition, Mississippi Fibernet 2000 provides avenue for FARMWEEK, produced on the MSU campus and transmitted to Mississippi E-TV every Monday for broadcast, and training opportunities to electronic classrooms housed at seven sites including MSU, MUW, Mississippi E-TV, and high schools in four areas of state.

CASE: National Association of Counties (NACo) and CES partnership targeting 1994 topic focused on children issues in the community, a result of the Children's Initiative Task Force comprised of CES, NACo, and local human resource agencies. Audiences at 300 downlink sites nationally were able to receive the program and discuss local issues in addition to responding to a national survey on-site via e-mail, telephone, and FAX; preliminary results of the on-site survey were presented live before end of national broadcast with local participants able to call in questions to national panel, thus enabling communities to have broader range of information for use in local community.

ISSUES in MEETING the NEEDS of COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

Let me return to the quote by Mecklenburger (1994, p.2) stating:

> "the information revolution challenges the ways we school the population--youngsters and adults alike. It challenges what people need to learn, when, and how; it offers up new new ways to educate; and it empowers new people and new institutions to be interested in doing some of the education work long expected only of formal institutions such as schools and colleges."

The quote alludes to challenges, and I would suggest to you that there are any number of issues and challenges confronting us as educational service providers in the 21st century. Let me start with the statement from the quote focusing on the 'new' people, agencies, and institutions and their involvement in community-based education.

"New People" and New Institutions

Gregg (1984) suggests that the process of identifying, mobilizing and utilizing resources in order to provide lifelong learning opportunities for all people may serve as the basis for inter-agency collaboration. A major challenge, therefore, is the development of linkages among/between community agencies and institutions (e.g., K-12, community colleges, higher education, libraries, business/industry, military, government). Issues raised and questions asked include the following:

1) Within the community, where are the 'points of access' available to the residents providing affordable, one-stop

access to everyone?

2) What are the strategies that would allow these community entities to combine efforts on behalf of broader community-based program(s)?

3) How can existing programs and resources representative of these various entities be leveraged in designing/ developing testbeds for using information technologies as a basis for educational and training access?

4) Where/how is the 'locus of control' for community-based learning assigned? Does there need to be a control center or is it more a matter of coordination? How can resources be shared? What agency within the community is best situated to take the first step to interface with other community organizations, agencies, and support mechanisms? How is this currently being done? How can that dialogue be facilitated?

"New Ways to Learn as well as New Ways to Educate"

A second part of the quote suggests the advent of new ways look at the teaching-learning transaction; for the 21st century, we are moving away from a teacher-centered concept to a focus on student-centered learning with increased responsibility on the

learner. Personnel and funding policies, accreditation standards, and state requirements providing authorization for offerings delivered by nonconventional modes all become factors for discussion. The concept of sharing resources becomes an even greater reality. And, the continuing evolvement of technologies challenge the educational service provider to target need and audience more decisively, plan more extensively, and form partnerships and collaborative efforts to a greater degree.

A most obvious challenge in enabling this student-centered approach is assessment of local capability to engage in learning activities regardless of time or distance; i.e. a focus on Distance Education. Mechanisms for human resource development including, but not limited to, faculty/staff training, incentives and support for faculty, and resource support are issues to be addressed.

For example, if a community is to examine the human infrastructure at the local, state and national level in support of learning at a distance, and strategically plan for the concept within the community context, the following will need to be addressed:

1) What are local examples of distance education that can serve as persuasive means of advancing the

methodology and changing views of teaching/learning environment for the 21st century? Who are the players?

2) What are the existing and future human resources needed for designing and organizing distance education?

3) What administrative and organizational structures exist that enable and facilitate community use and development of distance education? What mechanisms provide for personnel/staff to take advantage of "lead" people throughout the country (e.g., mentoring, faculty exchange, electronic study groups, conferences, training)?

4) What are the key roles and position qualifications necessary within the community to effectively implement distance learning opportunities?

5) How does the community operationalize "working models" targeting issues of design, quality, and evaluation based on work of collaborating agencies/institutions?

'What People Need to Learn, When, and How'

A third part of the Mecklenburger (1994) quote targets the challenges involved in articulating what people need to learn,...the when...and the how. Communities expect the creation

of collaborations and partnerships resulting in more comprehensive solutions to issues. The learning community expects immediate access and application, education that is accompanied by guidance in study, communication of up-to-date and authoritative knowledge, an opportunity for feedback, and assistance at a time when unanticipated problems arise from and within the program or course. Key products and services include useful knowledge that is based on research and experience, educational processes that facilitate and develop critical thinking, and the building of skills that enable citizens to resolve issues and foster vital, productive communities.

Key to these expectations, however, is community and personal ownership for the learning. In its program design and delivery, the Cooperative Extension System has recognized the trends reshaping the information landscape and the fact that these trends are driving major changes in society, and creating new information management paradigms for organizations. The System continues to examine how people within the community currently acquire, interpret, generate, access, distribute and store information. And, CES continues in its commitment to systemwide improvement in infrastructure, staffing, training, audience targeting, and support to operate in the new

environment.

The 'Ways We School the Population'

The final piece of the Mecklenburger quote targets the audience, both children and adults, focused on the unstated concept of lifelong learning. Mecklenburger (1994) suggests that in the world of 1994, learners are not uninformed. In fact, children and young adults have virtually the same access as adults to the world's information, to knowledgeable people, and to each other. At this point in time, for example, over 70 percent of the 3,500 County Extension Offices are linked electronically with leadership in the use of the Internet network and accompanying interface options of Almanac, Gopher, and the World Wide Web providing access to information and education previously unavailable.

As noted earlier, today it is possible to revamp scheduling of learning processes and speed the pace for the individual by providing "just-in-time learning", often through information technologies such as computer systems. To accommodate for this change, educational service providers must:

1) Rethink the traditional blocks of time identified for learning, and revisit the concept of the school and library

open 24 hours a day.

2) Consider the calendar year holistically rather than by pieces/specific months.

4) Consider issues of equity and availability of opportunity within community access? How does the community prevent the educational dilemma of the "haves" and the "have-nots"?

4) Recognize diversity in learners and learning style.

Let me add, the consideration of diversity reaches far beyond gender and ethnic differences as we look at lifelong learning in the 21st century. Recognizing and accepting differences and perceiving "being different" as being acceptable is critical. Recognizing diversity requires action in the design/development of programs, recognition that teaching-learning styles differ; multiple languages and variance in learning environment and climate as well as delivery will be necessary. Learners will bring to the experience special needs as well as great diversity in age, entry behavior, background, and expectations.

SUMMARY

As institutions and agencies look at meeting the needs of customers, community, and nation in the 21st century, lessons learned suggest four major components that must be considered: outreach, human capacity building, diversity, and quality.

In terms of outreach, networking, team building, partners, and collaboration are all descriptors of this concept. "Reaching out" requires clarification of roles, cooperation without control, flexibility, and tearing down of boundaries. Human capacity- building will focus on faculty/staff development, access to training, and support. This requires administrative and institutional support in taking risks, as well as recognition for efforts, building of credibility, and assessment of human, fiscal and environmental factors impacting lifelong learning, especially in light of the technological implications.

Can our communities do more toward solving the problems of our society, which are more vast and more complex than at any time in our history? Should they do more? The effort will have to begin with those who are responsible for the educational opportunities within the community, organizations, and management. It means building consensus in direction and in a need for flexibility and change in outcome for the 21st century learner. Community objectives must include identifying existing cost-effective models of learning, moving into areas of research that have the potential to significantly improve learner productivity beyond current capabilities, dramatically increase inter-agency coordination and collaboration, and make information

and existing tools and techniques involving the technological future more widely available. Critical to achieving these objectives will be building working relationship with other agencies/institutions to develop linkages that will assure rapid access to their information assets.

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